THE ART OF BATTLEFIELD™ V

BATTLEFIELD™ V

THE ART OF BATTLEFIELD™ V

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Thanks to the entire *Battlefield V* development team for creating an amazing game,
and to all of your families for their love and support.

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Developing a game requires a continuous creative process and this book reflects that process. Names, images, or ideas presented in this book may not be found in the final game or may appear in a different form.

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FOREWORD

THE CHALLENGE WAS TO RETURN TO WHERE IT ALL STARTED. TO REDEFINE THE MOST BRUTAL CONFLICT IN HISTORY.

The Second World War feels impossibly large. We had to choose what to research, where to visit, what to realize. The more we researched, the less we seemed to know. What we did know was that we wanted to sidestep overexplored territory of World War 2 and take our players somewhere new. Unseen territories. Untold stories. Unplayed experiences.

Fortunately for DICE, the Second World War is filled with inspiring material to draw on. Our toughest choices are always what to leave out.

DICE digs deep on research. The weapon details have to be exact, from the 3D model to precise ballistics. The vehicles have to be perfect, from profile to paint work. Each is sourced precisely, photographed in detail, and modeled with a fervor bordering on obsession. Everyone at DICE wants to respect the history. To respect those that fought. To get it right.

To those fighting, the war was mercurial. If the face of the Great War was the soldier in the trench, then the Second World War was defined by the soldier in the parachute. Tactics, technology, terrain—even the concept of a frontline could never be taken for granted. Change was the only constant.

Game development has its parallels to conflict: Overcoming problems. Identifying opportunities. Constant change. Darkest hours. Finest moments.

This book will offer insight into that process, from thumbnail beginnings to interactive worlds. It will unveil DICE's own vision for creating *unseen*, *untold*, *unplayed* moments from *Battlefield V*.

Battlefield 1942 shipped in 2002. In a way this game has been almost twenty years in the making. We hope you enjoy this unique look behind the challenge.

—THE *BATTLEFIELD V* TEAM

EXPLORING AN ERA

AN EARLY LOOK

We started the War Story concept in *Battlefield 1*. War Stories are presented in an anthology format where each stands on its own and can be played in any order. Inspired by history, each of *Battlefield*'s War Stories is a tale that didn't happen but could have.

They live in the cracks between known facts. With *Battlefield V* we wanted to push the format further. This time each story draws on a different nationality. Each is told in its native language. And each is designed to be played through the lens of a *Battlefield* class.

Early in the process, we start out by doing large quantities of simple black-and-white sketches. We essentially create a library of ideas from which we can pick and choose and even return to at a later point to remind ourselves of our intended direction. Most of the sketches seen above were later turned into proper concept art.

As the Second World War has been depicted in a wealth of adaptations, it was important for us to seek out the untold and unconventional while also ensuring that players would recognize elements and locales commonly associated with the war. Finding this balance proved to be a fruitful challenge and a good learning experience for us.

Giving ourselves free rein to explore in the first stage of the project was a crucial factor that helped open up conversations about what kind of stories we wanted to—or could—tell. We can be pretty loose with the concepts at this stage. This way, we are able to make sure that we have created enough variety, and we also take the opportunity to fill in any gaps with more interesting content.

Juxtaposing the quiet, idyllic scenery of a small Italian coastal town with full-on warfare was a very compelling idea to us. In a setting like this, we would have the opportunity to play around with a bold color palette, contrasting it with the unforgiving destruction that comes with relentless warfare. After all, war is indifferent to preserving this beauty.

The oil fields and refineries of Europe played a significant role in supplying Germany with the oil on which their war effort was dependent. The Allies carried out daytime and nighttime bombings to disrupt these facilities at various points over the course of the war.

This theme would allow us to go behind the scenes and explore environments that weren't the main stage for the conflict yet still carried a huge impact on the systems and inner workings of the machinery of war. The heavily industrialized backdrop—with stark silos and chimneys that tower over players—is steeped in a gloom that would fit the severity of the operations.

We wanted to create enticing and memorable locations that would immerse the players in the stories of the soldiers. Even as the war rages on, there's still a compelling world out there that had its own story before battle broke out.

The conflict is not just between the warring parties but also between humans and their environment. Our goal in capturing that was to provide additional depth to the storytelling, giving a sense of the locations not just as a backdrop for the conflict but as storied places in their own right.

What's most fun about this initial phase is that there's space to dream up epic—sometimes outrageous—*Battlefield* moments. Some make it into the game, while others stay on the drawing table. Landing by parachute on a plane or sinking an enormous sea fort might seem a little fantastic, but the point in this exercise is that it always leads to a chain reaction of new, interesting ideas.

WEAPONS & VEHICLES

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Cool vehicles are a staple of the *Battlefield* franchise, and World War 2 shaped the modern view of what a tank is with some of the most iconic military vehicles of all time. So we were in for a challenge.

As in all other parts of the game, our goal was to surprise and delight the players with the unfamiliar. In this case that meant finding what was new and exciting about something they might have seen hundreds of times.

TELESCOPE, Unit
M48
SERIES NO. 721553
SERIAL NO.

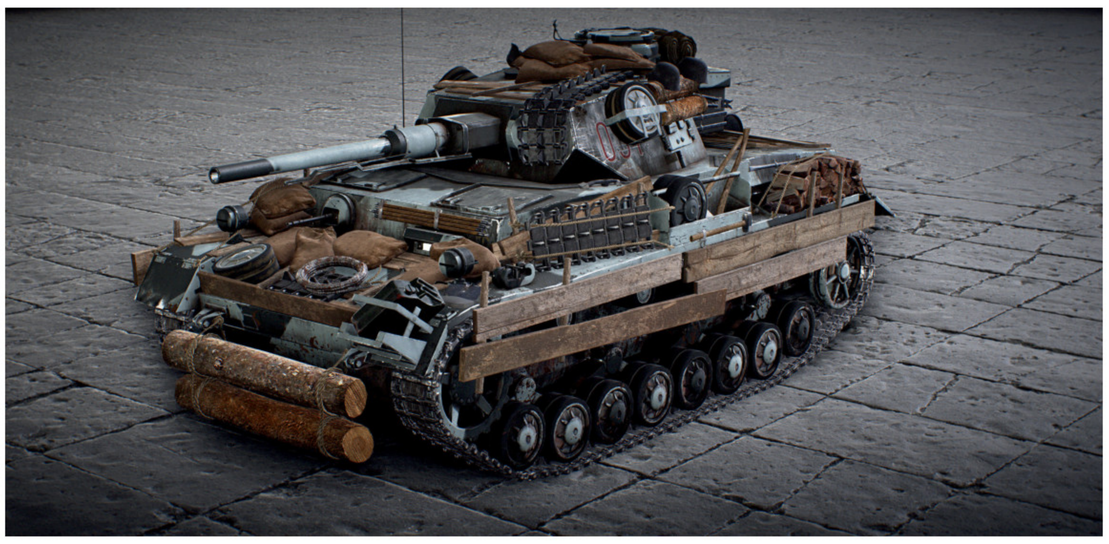
20

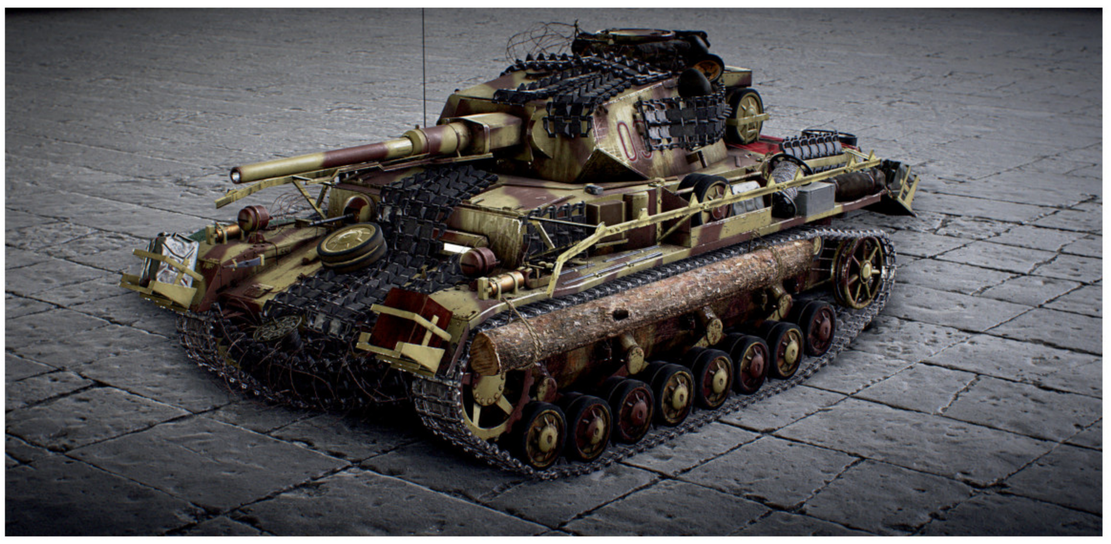
GRATICULES ¼ APART
AND ¼" AND 1" HIGH
1943

WINNIE

To create compelling weapons and vehicles, we armed ourselves with as much research as we could, in order to find an interpretation that would have a special *Battlefield* flavor that complemented how we went about creating the characters, which we'll get into in the next chapter.

The key was to treat the vehicles less like mass-produced factory issues and more like extensions of their crew over the course of a long war, with customizations that gave them a character all their own. Whether gung-ho, sneaky, or grizzled, each tank would have its own personality, which we wanted to be obvious even from a glance.





CHARACTER CREATION

POPULATING THE BATTLEFIELD

With *Battlefield 1*, we challenged the preconceptions of what the many different soldiers across the Great War looked like and were equipped with. Extensive research paired with the idea of presenting them as seen through a modern lens gave the soldiers unique and often unexpected designs while maintaining a high degree of historical accuracy. As the franchise returns to World War 2, the soldier designs of *Battlefield V* follow the same principle, leaning further and digging deeper into the unseen aspects of a much more familiar era.

We construct our desired build and physique on a mannequin that we dress in a mix of reproductions, custom-made objects, and actual military equipment. This unique process makes the most of the strengths of concept and character artists sculpting together in real life.

Employing the technique of photogrammetry, every single detail as it appears on the life-sized model gets captured in the photo-to-3D scanning process, which demands meticulous weathering and detailed patina work. This process resembles that of movie production more than traditional game production, and the game model only requires finer digital reworking and texturing.

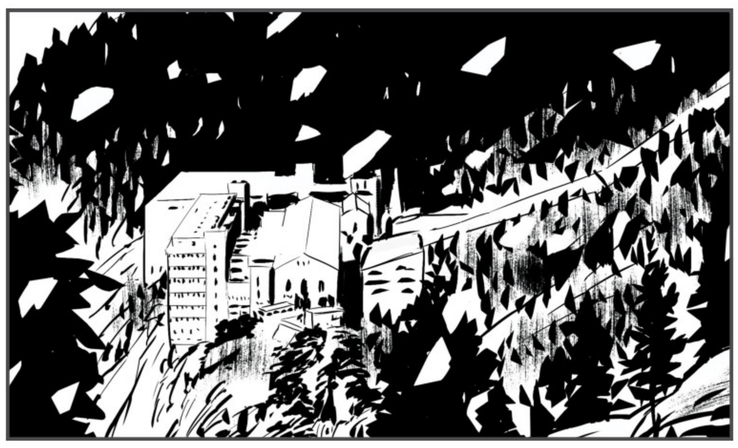
ARCTIC REGION

NORDLYS | ARCTIC FJELL | ARCTIC FJORD

1943: Norwegian ski commandos fight a war of high-speed hit-and-run against German installations among Scandinavia's frozen peaks. Players take the role of a young Norwegian hunter as she fights not only for her country's liberation—but her family's survival.

Norway was strategically important for the war. It was a gateway to the North Atlantic, and it granted the Germans access to Swedish steel. Both Germany and Great Britain drew up plans to invade what was a neutral nation.

A population of three million Norwegians would be occupied by a force of five hundred thousand Germans.



Our cutscenes showcase a mix of big-picture action and personal moments. Our touchstone was "human stories set against epic warfare." They offer a unique opportunity to get to know characters in the war in a way that multiplayer can't easily achieve. They show close-up action with the familiar weapons and vehicles of multiplayer but in an emotive and visual way that multiplayer cannot.

We wanted a low-key, nature-infused approach to the facility. The location is inspired by the Norsk Hydro facility at Vemork. Our setting includes the twin elements of occupation and resistance. We set "Nordlys" just after the tragic events of Operation Grouse, where British commandos attempted a covert strike on the facility. The operation was a failure, resulting in the total loss of the commando force. We wanted to explore the possibilities of a story that might fall in the shadow of these real events.

PANG!

These paint-overs were completed for an internal marketing trailer. We work closely with our cinematic team when trailer season rolls in. The turnaround time for this type of paint-over is fairly quick, as new versions of the trailer are pushed out and reviewed daily.

Color scripts are established at the start of the marketing process, giving us the opportunity to push the lighting and composition within each shot to create a clear visual story line. We make sure that the look and feel of the trailer stays aligned with the art direction by refining and polishing lighting, effects, and material response as we go. By the end of production, these paint-overs act as visual targets to guide the team.

These paint-overs provide a great opportunity to quickly try out different effects. In the top image, we needed to figure out how a snowstorm should look and feel in this particular lighting. Below, we're experimenting with the exposure from the headlights. How much of the environment should catch light, and how much can we obscure?

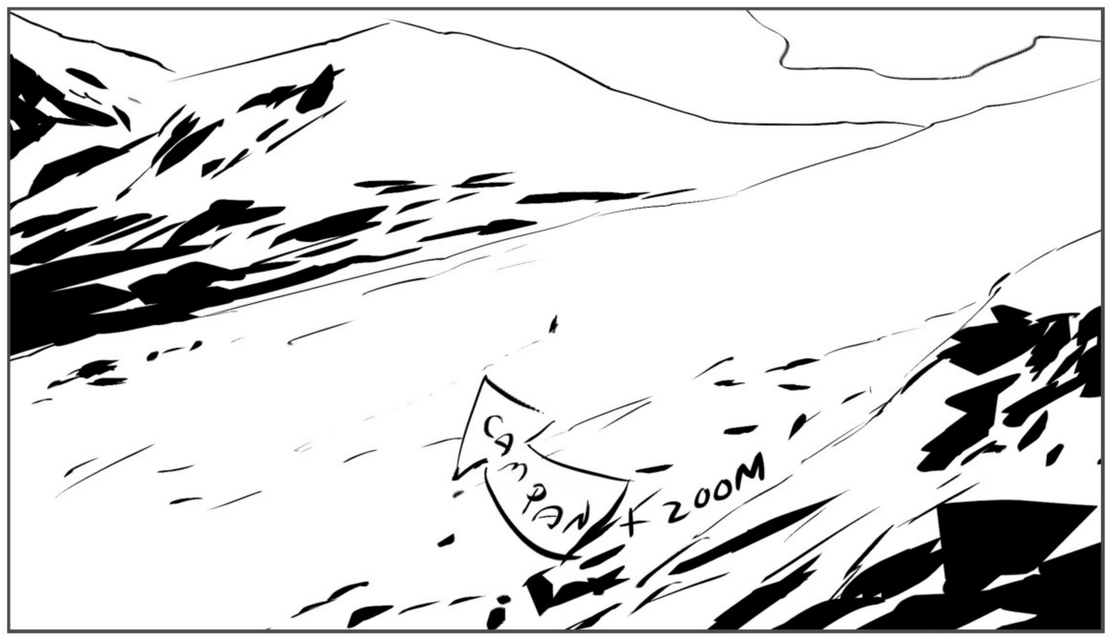
In this step-by-step sequence we see the original screenshot at the top. It's fairly dark and lacks atmosphere, which makes the scene appear flat. We take care of that in the first paint-over seen in the middle. Later, in the bottom image, we focus on incorporating more photorealistic detail in the materials and lighting and include the frozen waterfall in the background to communicate the scale of the world.

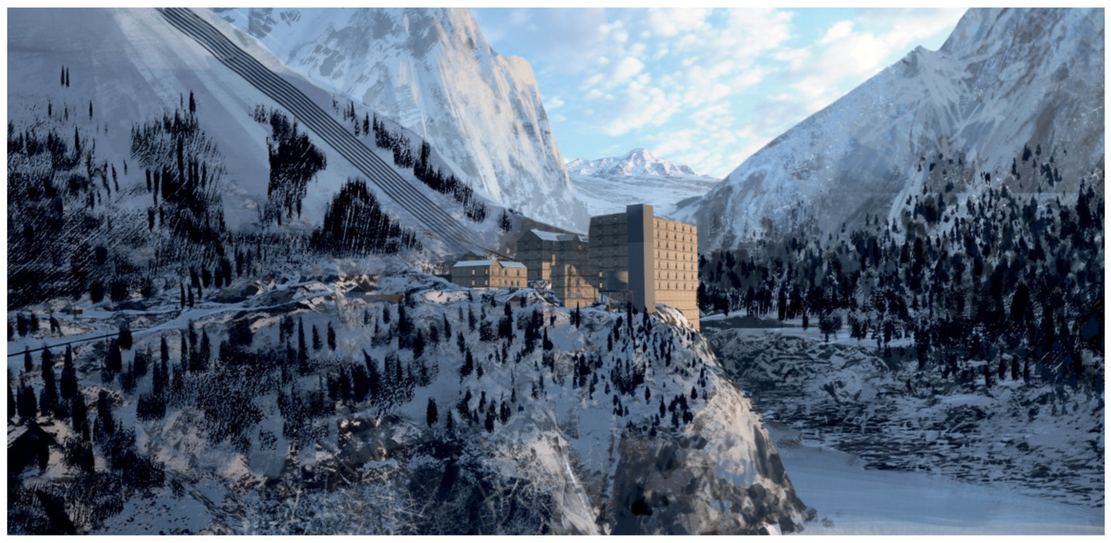
The first part of the Norwegian episode takes place in a fictionalized version of a particular heavy water plant under German occupation. We established the dark and frozen winter landscape early on to differentiate it from the bright, snowy landscapes that we're used to seeing. This would reinforce the sense of isolation and of strange operations underfoot.

The northern lights contribute significantly to this level's identity, so it was very important for us to get them right. They required a lot of attention, and with the look and feel of the snow they proved to be the most challenging aspect to nail down. Thanks to our talented lighting team, we managed to create something we felt was believable.

We needed to convey that the facility was under German occupation. The exterior space was now heavily guarded, with checkpoints and probing floodlights searching the area for unwanted visitors. The interior was deliberately left relatively untouched. We pushed for a quietly abandoned feel, aside from the few rooms still in use by the occupying force.

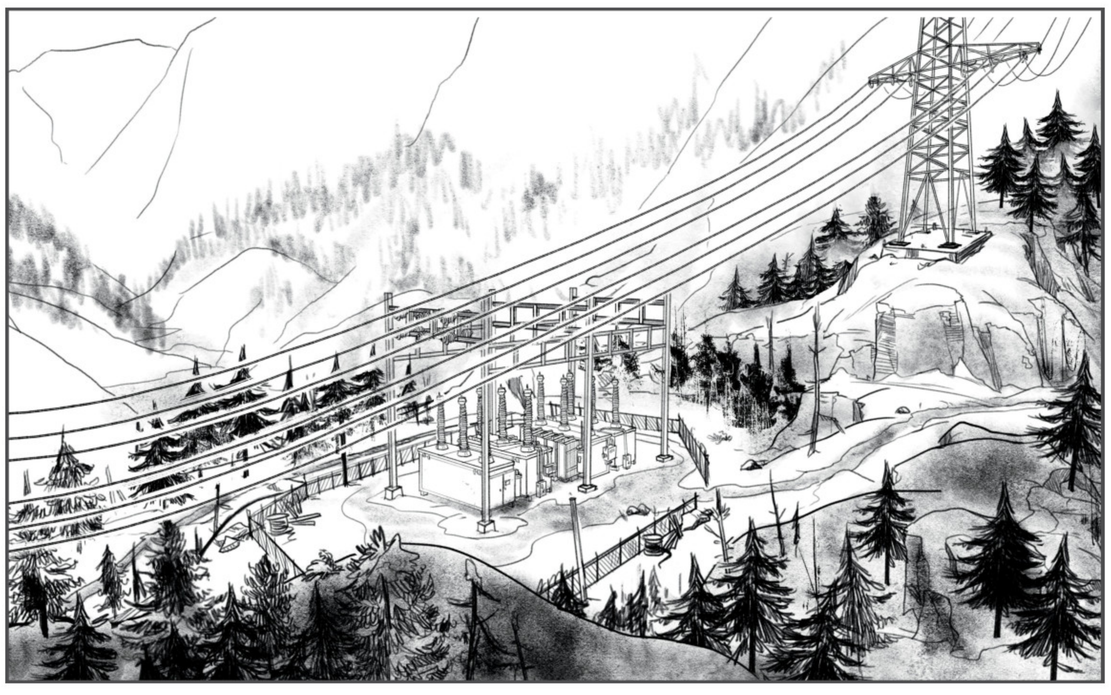
Later in the story, when our main character is on the run through the Norwegian wilderness, we went all out to create a harsh and uninviting landscape by stripping away all artificial light. As the snowstorm becomes more ferocious, the cliffs and rocks seem more threatening, almost deadly. At this point, she truly is alone and at the mercy of the elements.





The *Battlefield* team looks for epic, believable spaces with jaw-dropping qualities. Norway's mountain peaks naturally lend themselves to this.

The final portion of the story takes us to the Norwegian fjords, where we decided to switch things up. The previously dark landscapes have now been replaced with stark white snow, almost too bright to look at. We also wanted to establish the scale early on. Here, we had the opportunity to convey the immense scale of the surrounding vista by having the chapter start at a high altitude.



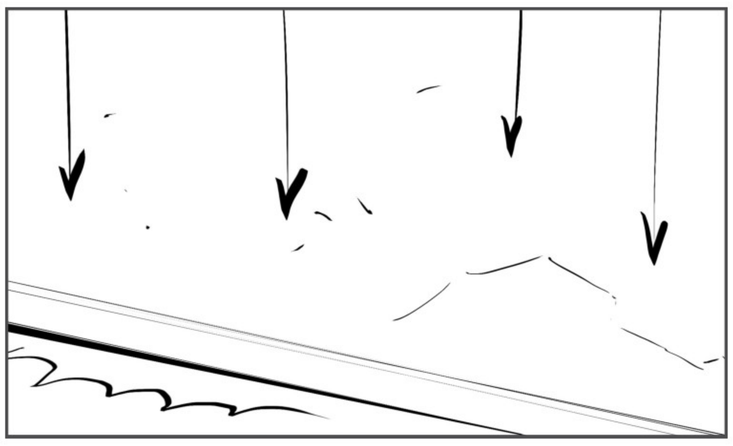
Not all concepts are painted. Sometimes a line drawing does a better job of communicating the layout of an area. This approach allows us to focus on details such as the placement of assets, and it usually ends up being faster too, allowing for more experimentation!

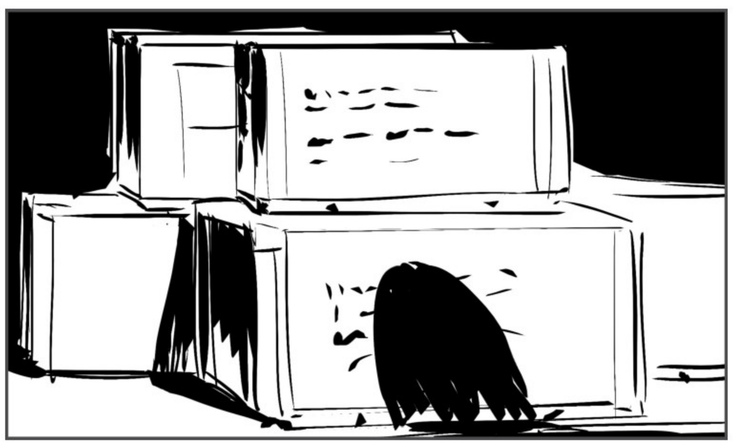
Above are two examples of the layout exploration of the village area of this map. Doing things from a bird's-eye perspective is useful to establish how assets sit in the world. The image at the top makes it seem like the buildings have been encircled by an invisible border. So a second version, shown below, explores an alternate take with a more realistic layout.

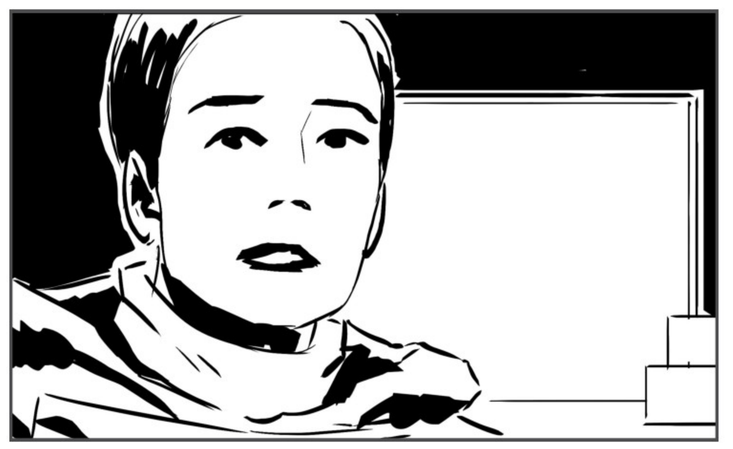
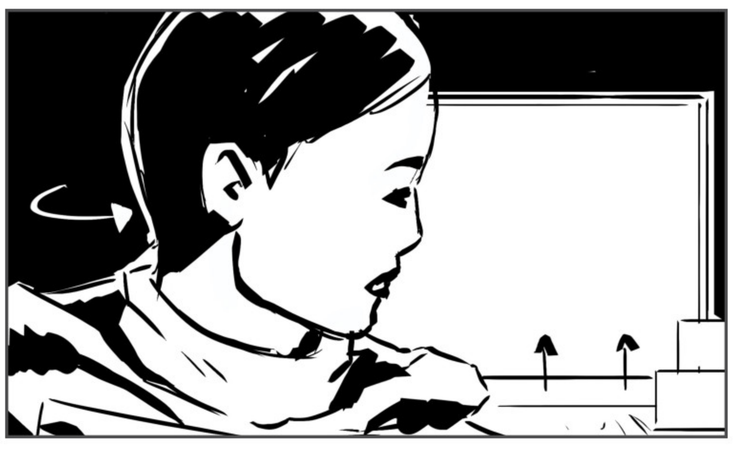
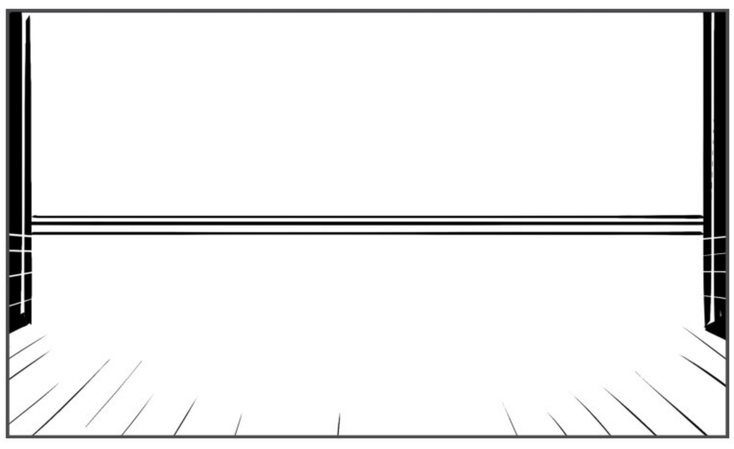
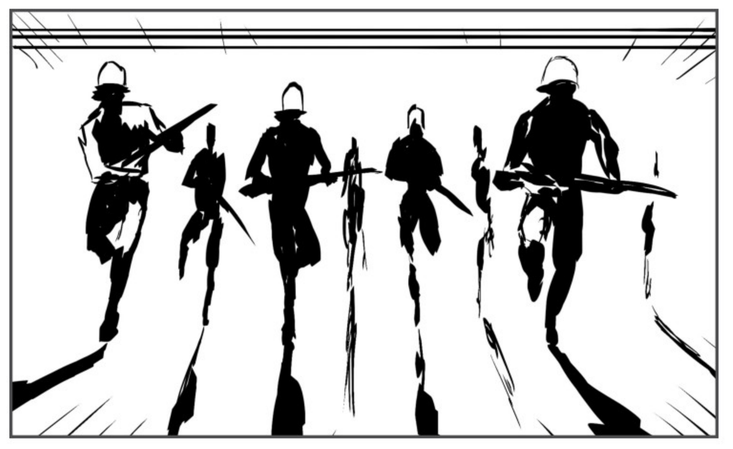
We pushed the vibrancy of the colors, regardless of setting. Thankfully, Norway sits at a latitude that enjoys the midnight sun, so we had no issues with finding real-world inspiration for interesting lighting situations for our map.

Skiing in *Battlefield V* is a first for the franchise. This provided the possibility to create fast-paced, dramatic action. We imagined how the experience could be enhanced by effects such as snow bursts and lens optics. The top image, made in the exploration phase, ended up giving our designers the idea to actually put skiing in the game!

We explored numerous subthemes for the final chapter of the level to fit the dramatic conclusion of that particular story. The whole area has an industrial feel to it, with the coal hub and harbor dominating the landscape. Finding an identity for each of these separate themes was a challenge at times. If they were too different from each other, the level would risk feeling unfocused. If they were too similar, it could feel confusing.





Things change a lot during game development. At one point in the story, the "Nordlys" climax took place inside a submarine pen.

During the German occupation of Norway, the Kriegsmarine converted several Norwegian naval bases into submarine stations. This allowed the Germans to transfer U-boats to other coastal cities in the country to extend their range of operations. We liked the idea of using a submarine station as the site for a tense infiltration mission.

Both Britain and Germany knew how vital the Norwegian territory would be to success in the war—particularly in the war for the Atlantic. The U-boat was identified as a powerful icon of the German Kriegsmarine.

Numerous destroyers from both sides of the conflict were sunk during the naval battles of the Norwegian campaign. With hundreds—if not thousands—of casualties, this was an opportunity to depict the aftermath of this clash in a haunting and unsettling way.

A lot of attention was paid to the different materials that come with the coldness of the region. We had to consider the texture and color of snow in all of its different forms under a variety of lighting conditions. We came back to this several times during the process, as there was always something that could be improved.

We also had a chance to introduce a very exciting angle to the story here, putting the player in the shoes of a lethal commando in an unexpected setting, since most people won't typically associate Norway with the covert operations and stealthy nighttime raids we see in this level.

The scene in which Solveig submerges under the water was very interesting to create. The dark water meant that there was little else that we could use to populate the image. We took this opportunity to create some really eerie compositions to reinforce Solveig's state of mind.

ARCTIC FJELL

This level was inspired by the majestic mountains in the northern part of Norway. We had quite a few themes that we wanted to explore here, one of them being the defensive positions set up in the difficult mountainous terrain by the German Gebirgsjäger.

The idea of fighting in an inhospitable location—which is a source of danger in itself—was something we latched on to from the beginning. We wanted the players to feel like they were unsafe just by standing on top of the mountain. One wrong step, and they'd fall to their death.

We started this level by doing loose black-and-white sketches to imagine how gameplay could work with the features that we wanted to include. Fighting on a steep mountain ledge was an idea that everyone was on board with from the beginning. The key to making the level believable was to get the verticality right, so early a lot of thought was put into how we'd convey that.

We established the primary palette for the level pretty much from the start. We knew we wanted different color schemes for the other levels based in Norway, so this would basically be our chance to go for the iconic crisp, fresh weather associated with the Arctic region.

Among the first dangers that come to mind when thinking of big, snowy mountains are the fatal avalanches. We really wanted to expose players to this overwhelming force of nature, but it ultimately had to stay on the drawing board because it overlapped with the snowstorm theme that we already had.

ARCTIC FJORD

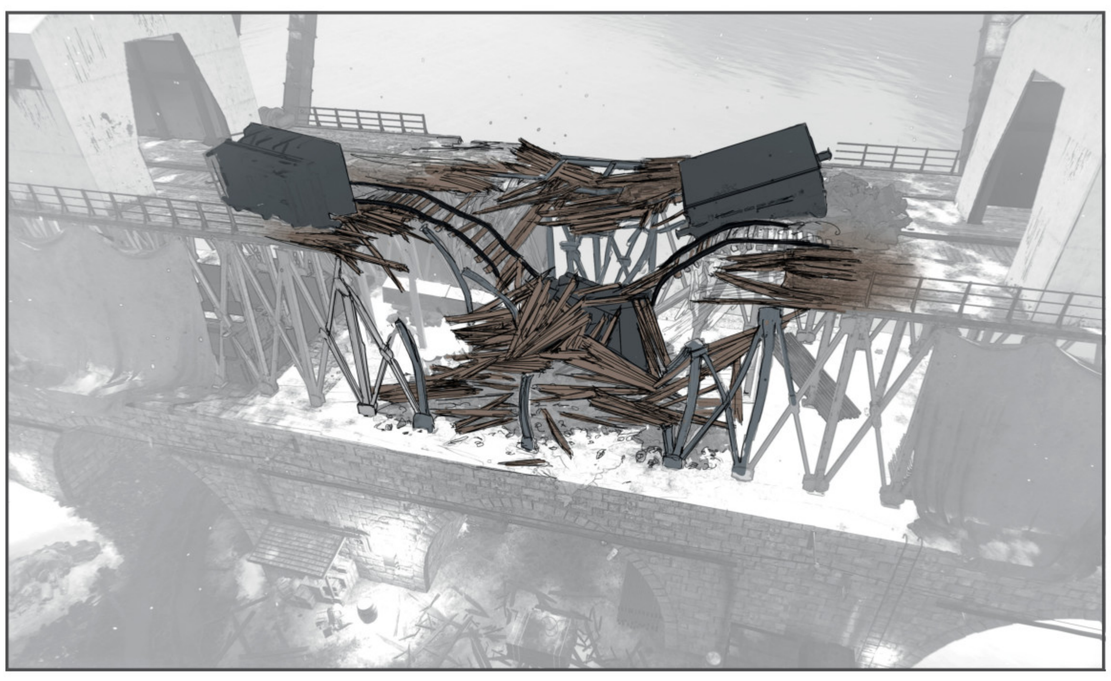
"Arctic Fjord" was the first multiplayer level that we started developing, which also meant that it was one of the levels that underwent the most iterations. Lighting was one of the things we struggled with for a long time—going from broad daylight, to dark dusk, to finally arriving at a soft but vibrant dawn.

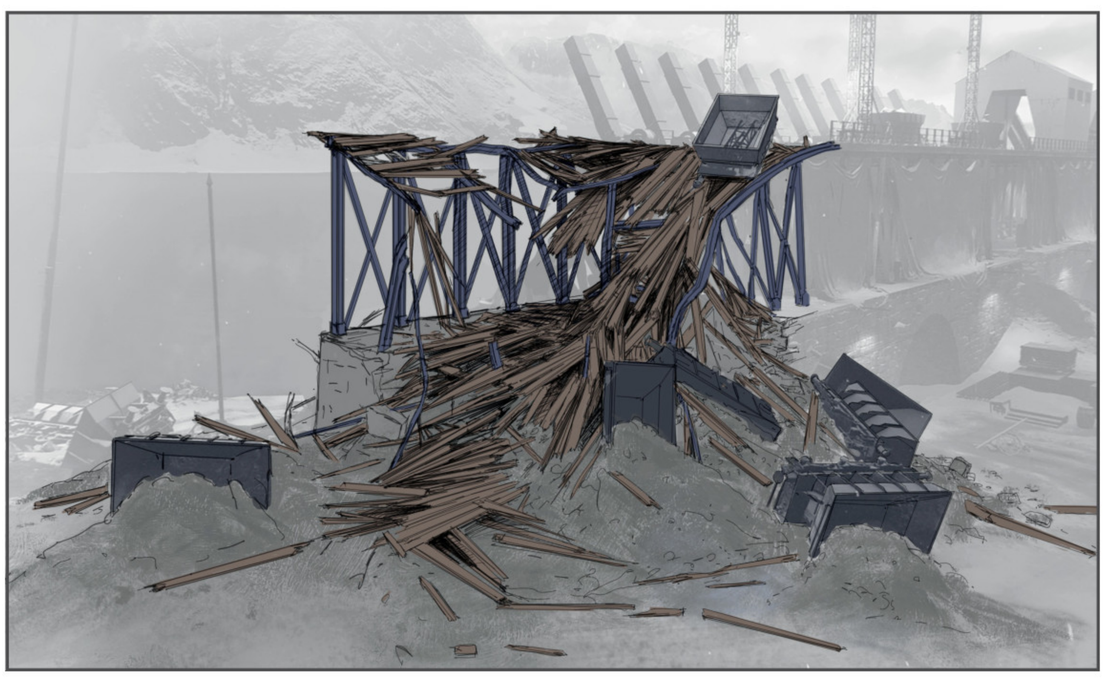
There are a number of themes at play in this level. The key aspect was to convey a journey from cold, snowy nature to bombed human spaces—switching up the intensity from cold to hot, from natural to urban. The challenge was to make sure that the areas felt believable. For a long time, we only had these three rows of residential houses, which we didn't feel conveyed the scale that we were going for. It wasn't until we added the city backdrop and the extended harbor area later in the development that it finally came together.

The image at the top is one of the earliest that we created for the project. This was before we had any maps laid down, but it still ended up being a reference point for the lighting that we would eventually go for. What goes around . . .

We always make visual target images when starting work on a new level in order to nail down key aspects of that particular map. It's usually a collaboration between several disciplines from across the team. This way, we can catch potential issues and areas that will require special attention early on. We would often return to these concepts illustrating the fire and ice theme to remind ourselves of the balance we wanted between fire and snow.

The corridor below the coal cart rails was a particular favorite of ours. We had the chance here to create a space loaded with industrial details, which was a refreshing break from the snow and ruins just outside.





A lot of thought was put into how different types of destruction would affect the surrounding terrain. We'd do paint-overs illustrating how snow would melt under the heat of flames and then preserve some of the snow in areas where there were no active fires. Sometimes we do very specific paint-overs to solve a particular problem and assist our level artists; such was the case with the drawings of the destroyed rails on the bottom of this page.

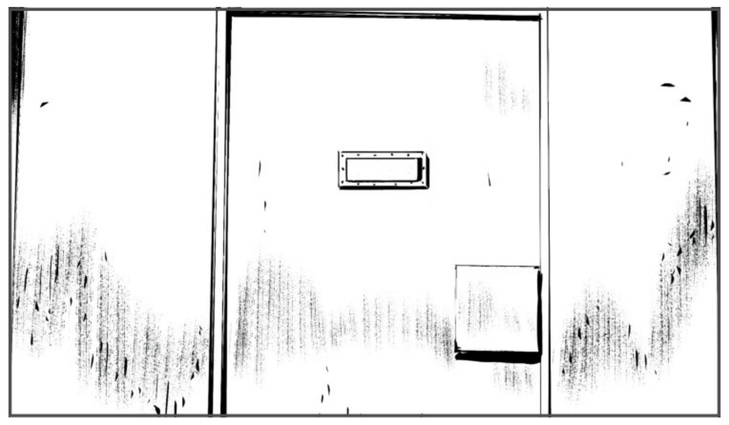
NORTH AFRICA

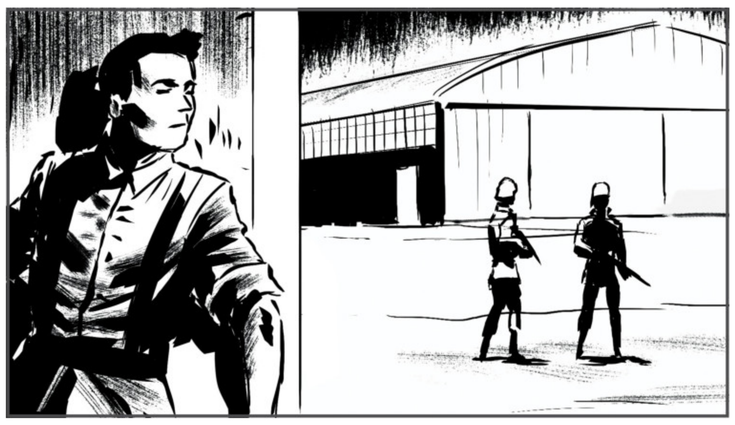
UNDER NO FLAG | HALFAYA | AFRICAN FOX

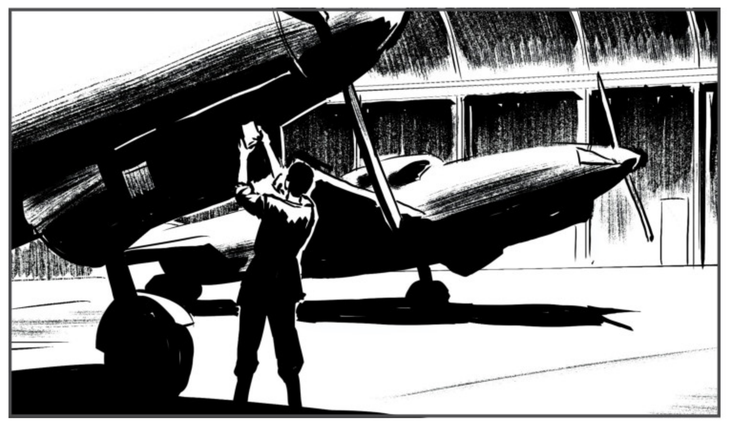
The war evolved at lightning speed. Vehicles. Weapons. Strategy. Tactics.

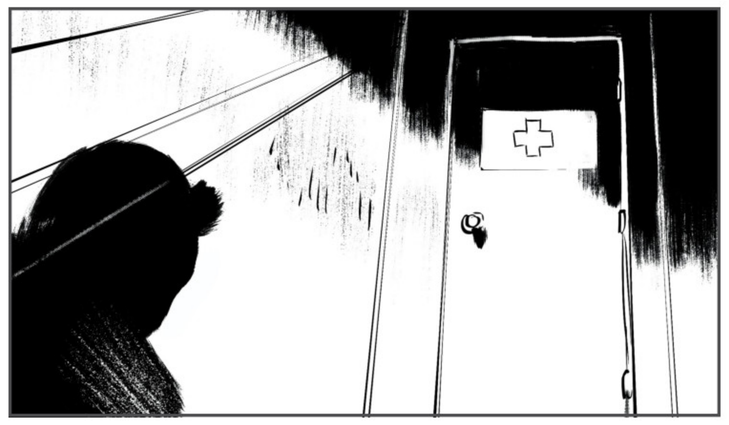
Somewhere in the North African desert, a new type of combat was improvised. Part Viking, part hitting below the belt. It would cost the enemy a great deal while consuming only minimal resources.

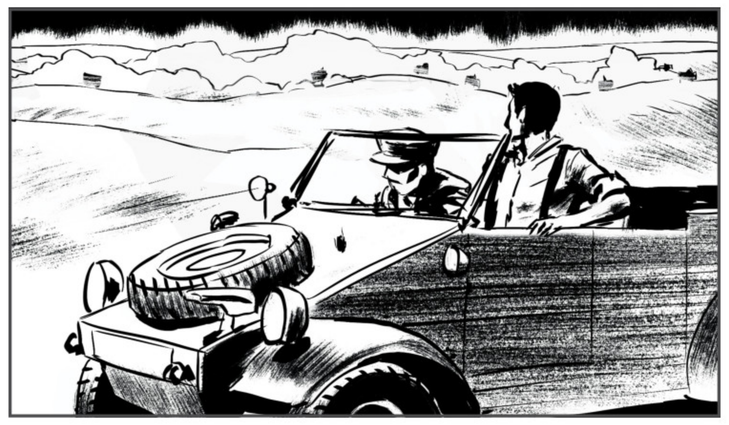
This new type of soldiering required a new type of soldier.
Free thinkers. Innovators. Risk takers. Troublemakers. Buccaneers.
A prelude to what is now classified as Special Forces.



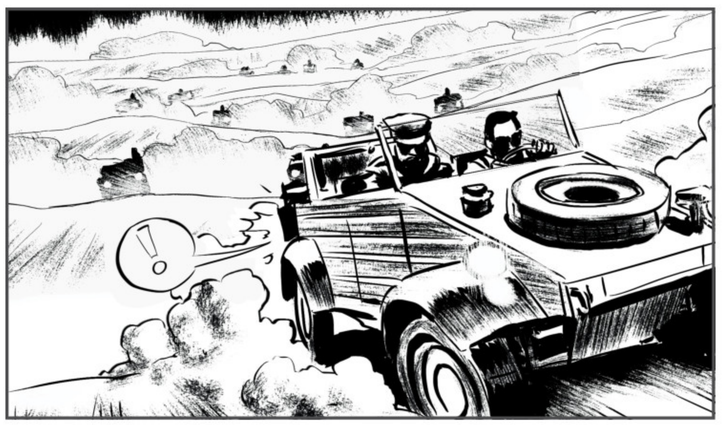
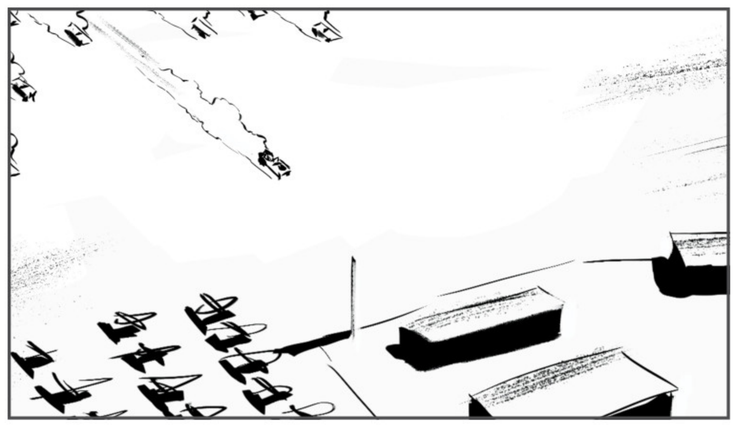








An MP once asked Churchill, "Is it true, Mr. Prime Minister, that there is a body of men out in the Aegean Islands, fighting under the Union flag, that are nothing short of being a band of murderous, renegade cutthroats?" Churchill famously responded, "If you do not take your seat and keep quiet, I will send you out to join them!"

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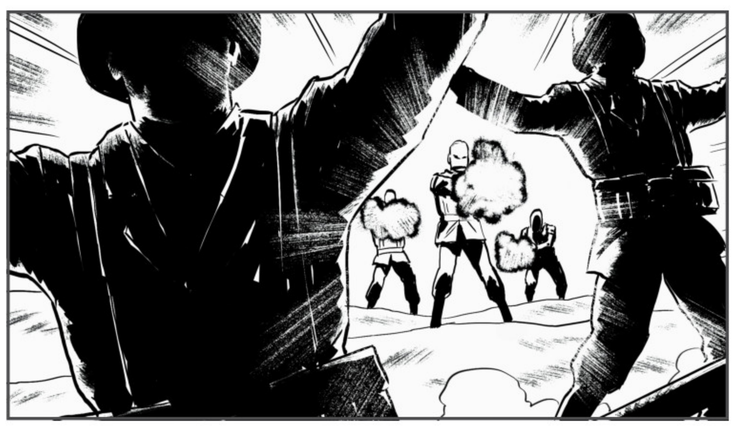
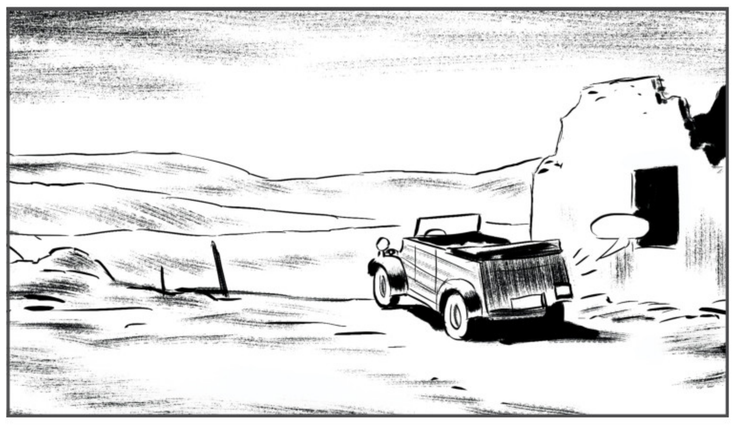
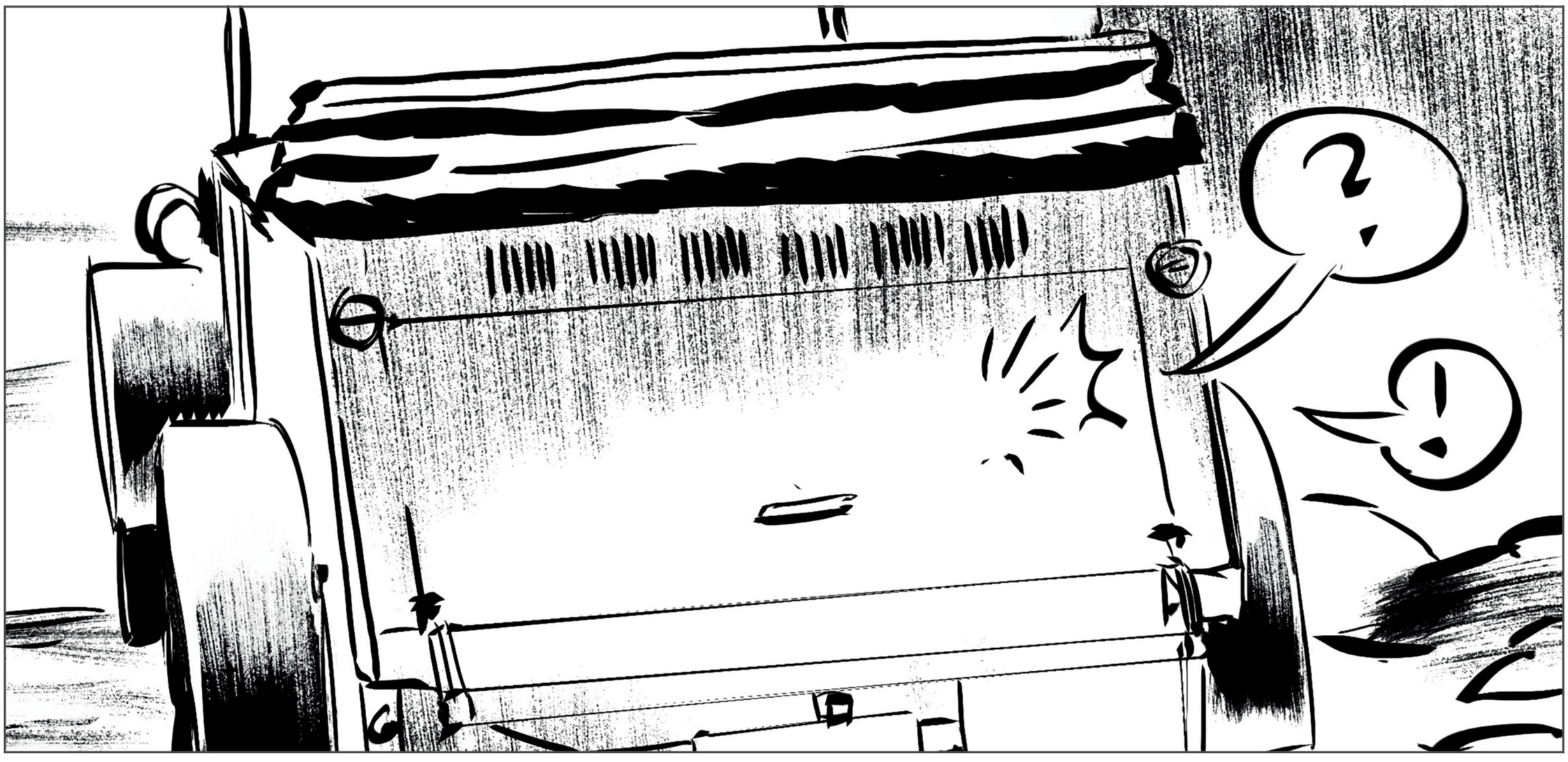
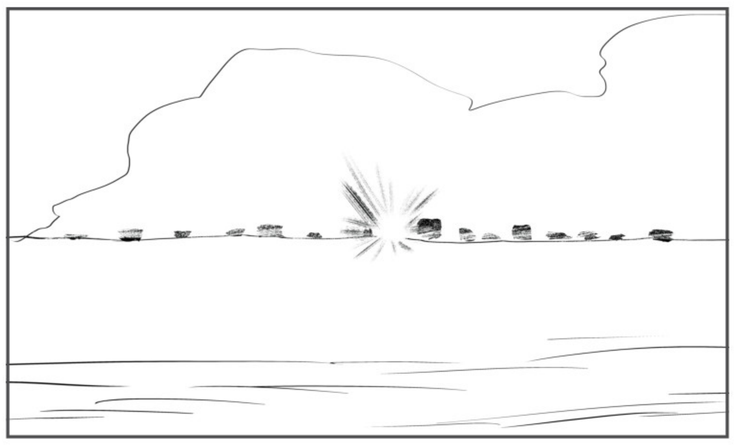
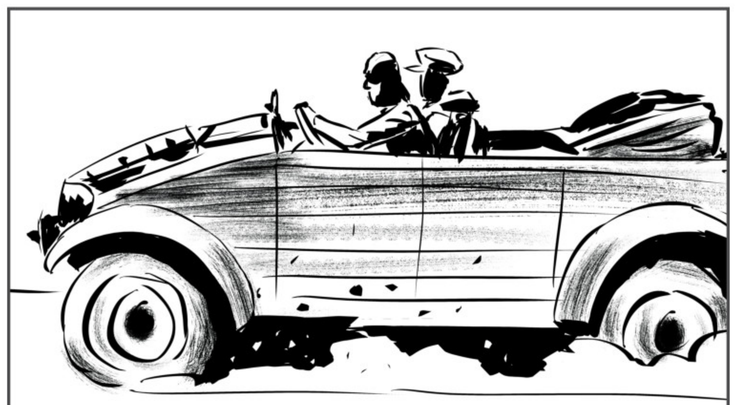


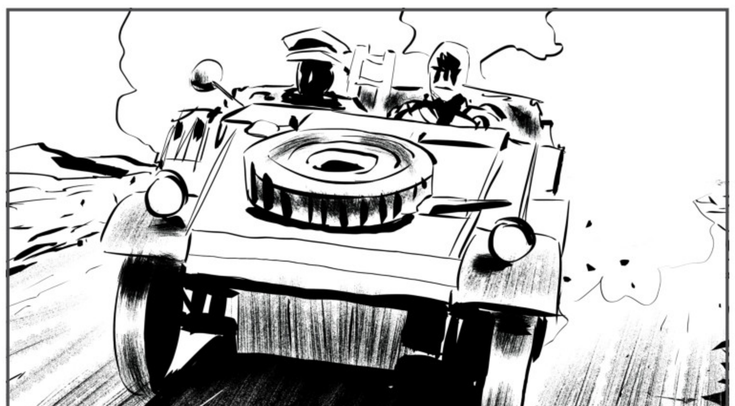



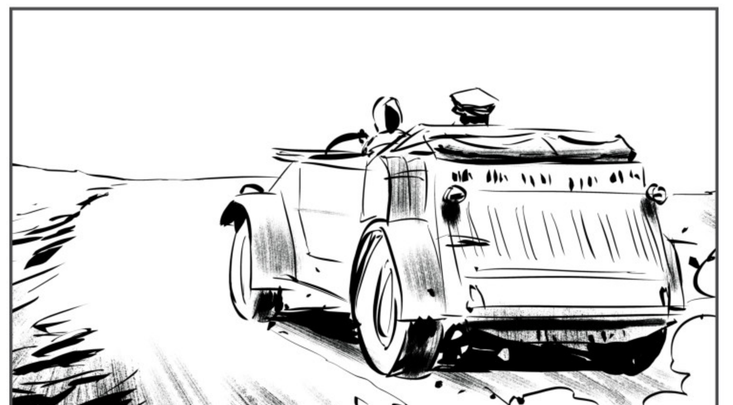
When approaching the North African theater, we needed to incorporate nuances that truly captured this varied and distinct part of the world. The last thing we wanted was a dull expanse of desert, so we were excited to go on a proverbial deep dive into the ways we could present this setting.

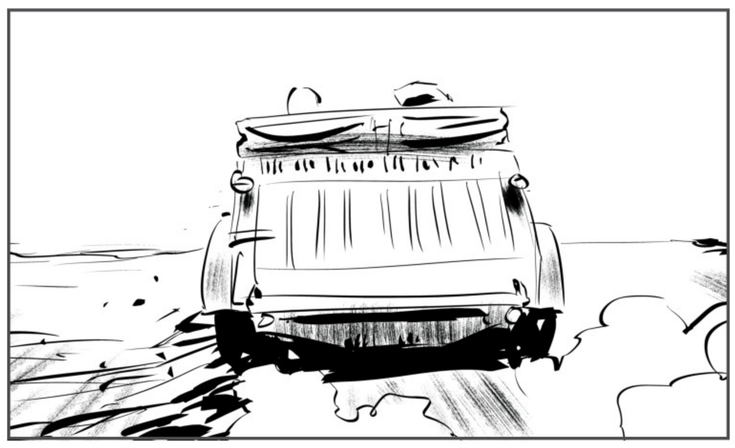
The vibrant color schemes of the verdant river lands and valleys seems to contrast with the vast, arid plains of the desert, presenting us with a delightful (and occasionally surprising) range of color and light to work with. This would ensure that we'd have variation not only between levels but within them as well.

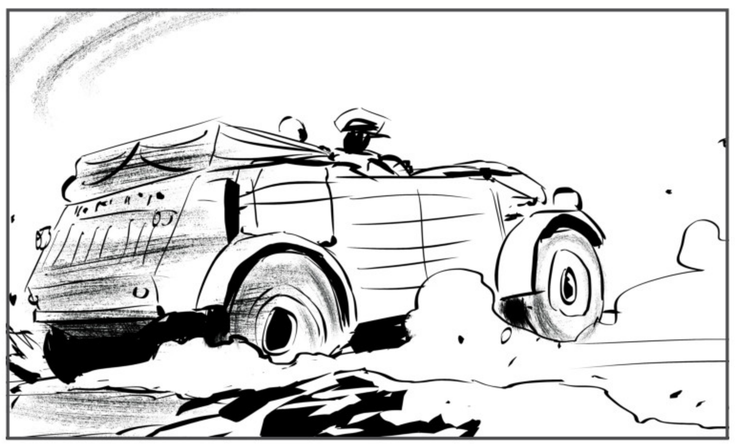


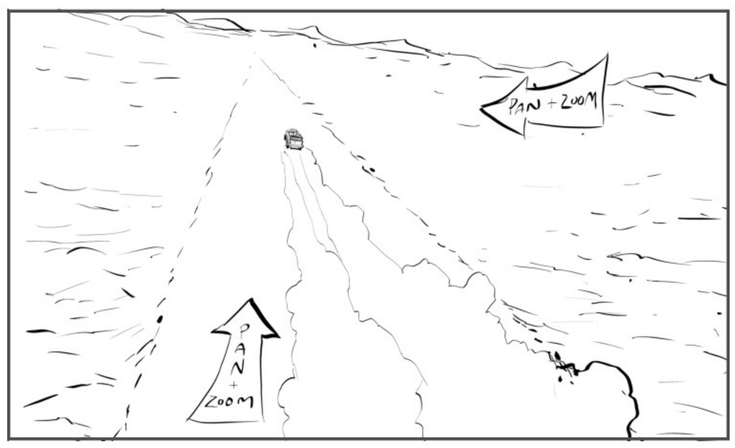


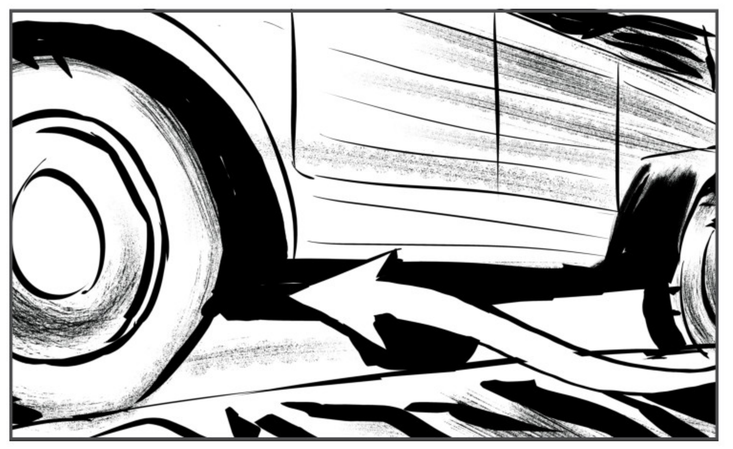


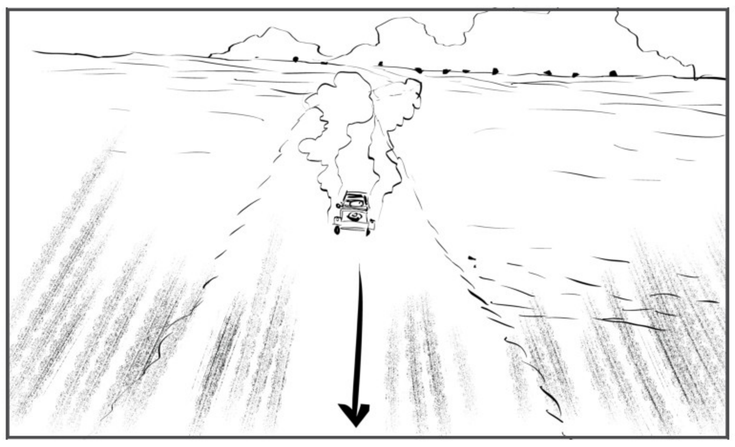


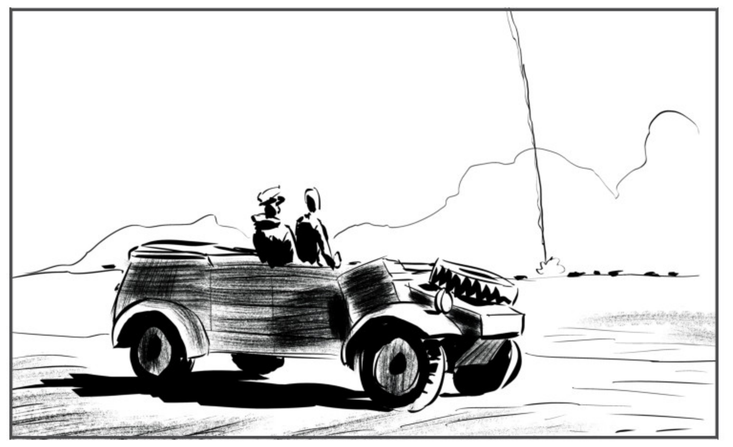






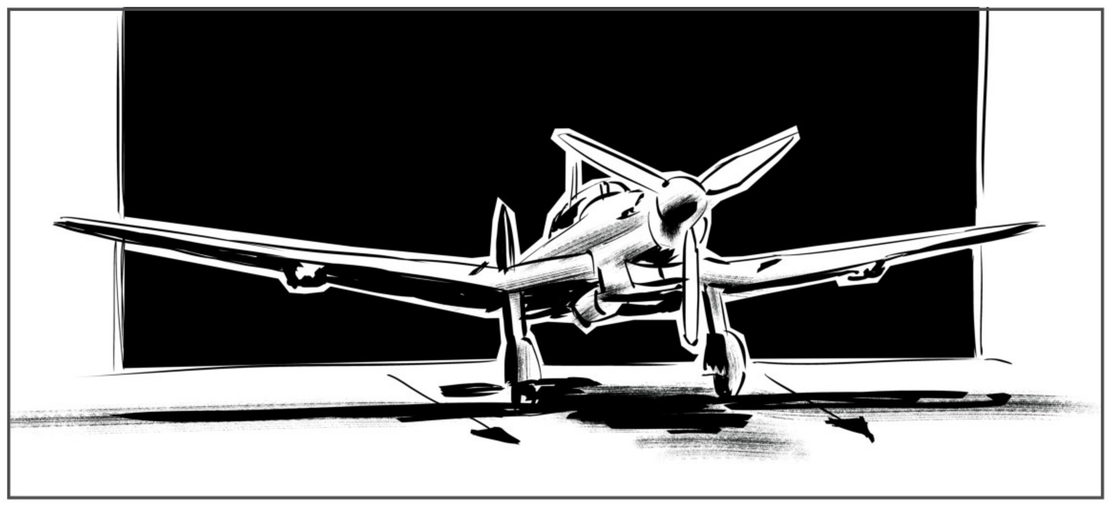


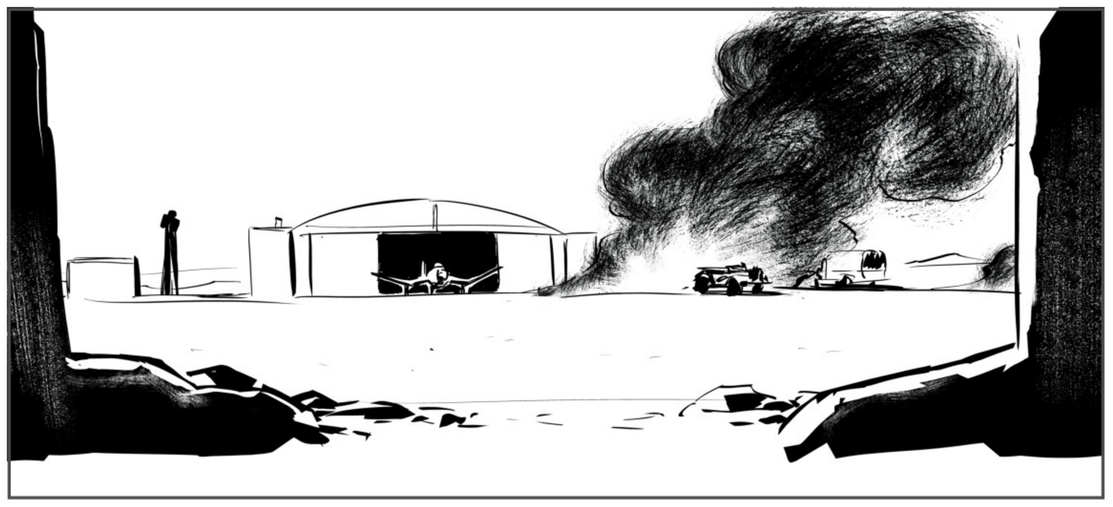


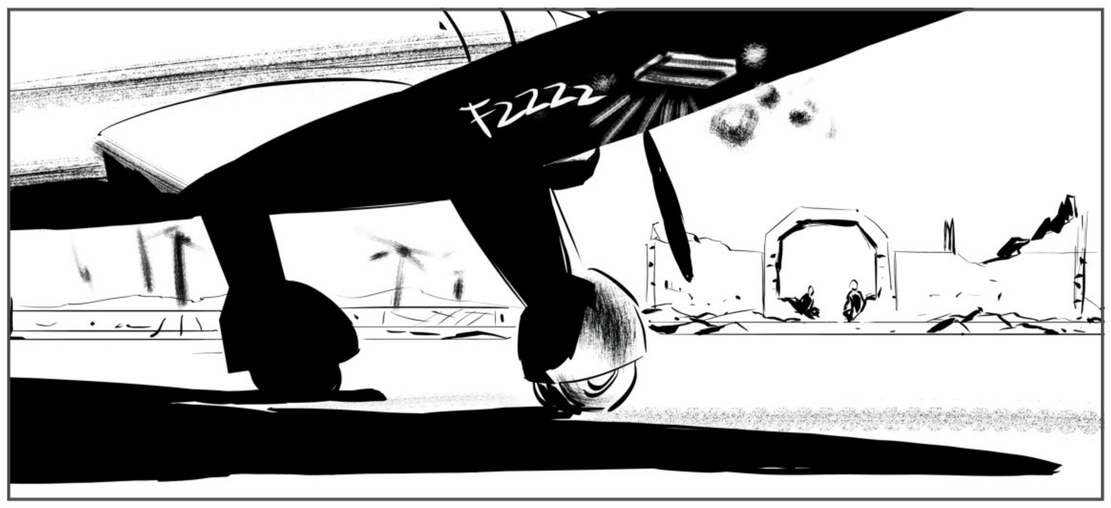


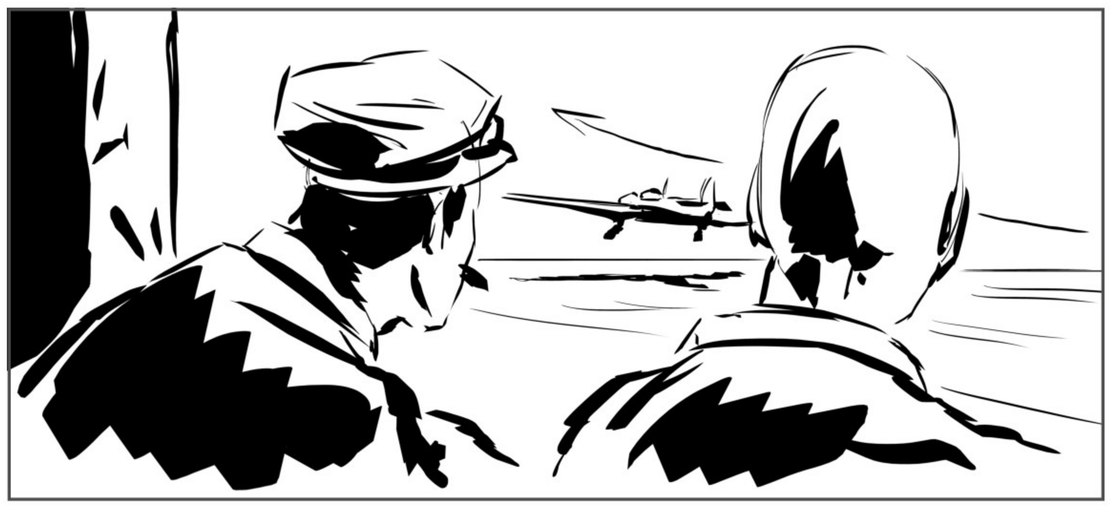
While we strive for authenticity and immersion across the game, we do try to instill each of the War Stories with its own flavor and tone. "Under No Flag" was where we wanted to spend our humor chip. Taking two London criminals and dropping them into a place where they just didn't belong made us laugh, so we started there.

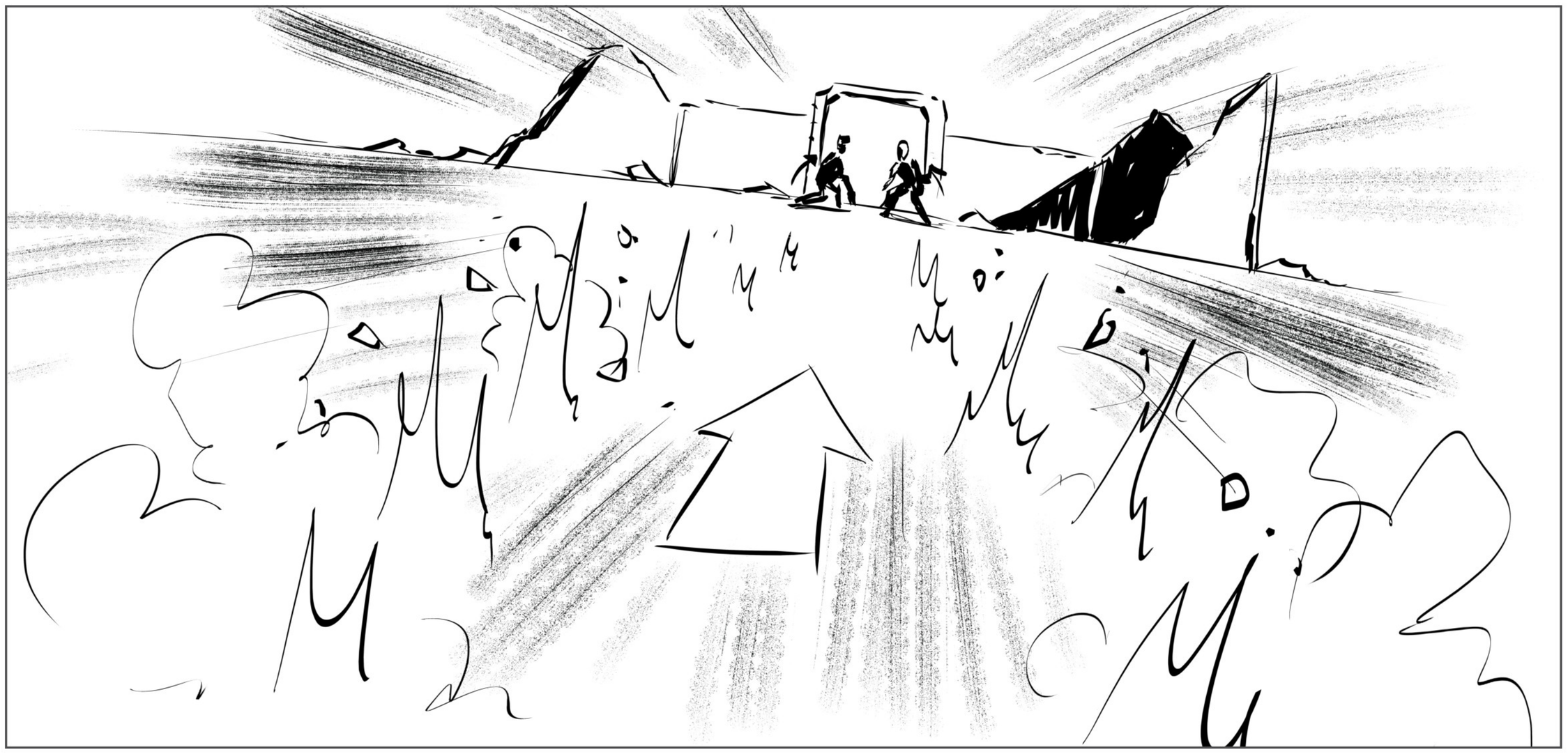
VGJ 188











The obvious candidate for this story was David Stirling's world-famous SAS. But when considering our theme of "unseen, untold, unplayed," we looked a little further, leading us to the SAS's little-known sister unit, the Special Boat Section, or "SBS."

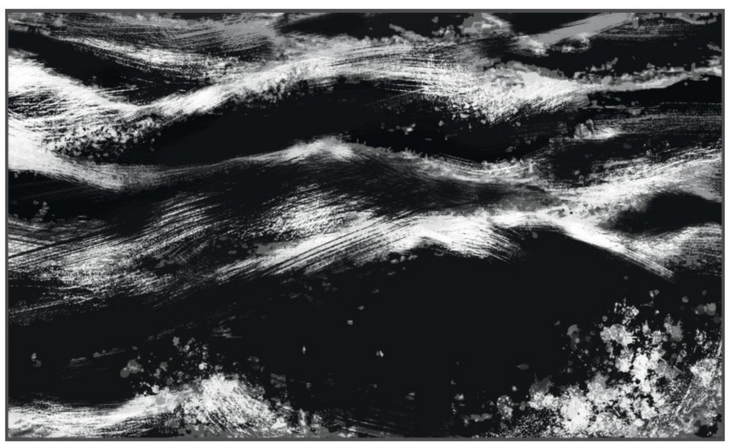
The North African campaign also presented us with dramatic moments that couldn't be seen anywhere else during the war. The extensive sabotage operations on German airfields by the Special Boat Section were pivotal in the war, destroying more German aircraft on the ground than the RAF did in the air. We knew it'd take something special to do this justice.

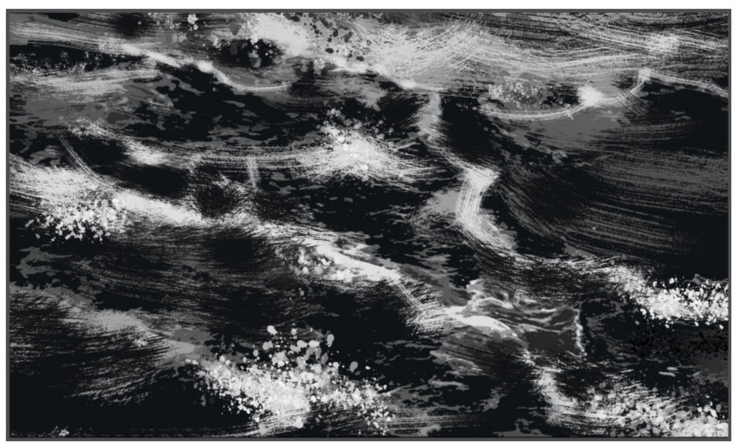
We wanted a very distinct feel for each War Story in the larger single-player campaign, and the SBS motto "Under No Flag" established the tone for these chapters when we were exploring the intense action and stealth scenes above.

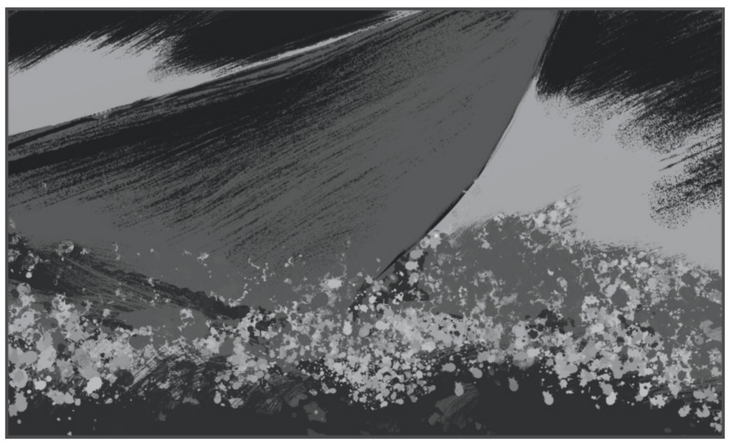
This also meant that we could go all out when exploring the unique moments we could create in the campaign. Not everything would end up being feasible, but everyone would have room to flex their creativity and try ideas that excited them. This resulted in the creation of some of our favorite paintings from the project.

Having such a varied setting to draw from meant we could also cast a wide net when exploring locales and set pieces. North Africa has a rich Roman legacy that a lot of people might not associate with the region. That notion alone proved to be powerful creative fuel for us, as it fit well with our ambition of showing the unseen sides of the war and how it truly spanned the world outside of the conventional expectations that decades of cinema and games have instilled in us.

The image at the top of this page is an early exploration concept to illustrate the portrayal of dynamic reactions in our character animation. We later reused it for this level, as we found that it fit the tone well. The image at the bottom is an early take on how we could bring lush greenery into the desert environment. We constantly needed to remind ourselves of how far we could take the vibrancy of the colors, so it's very useful for us to go back from time to time to reinforce that idea.







Initial deployments of the SAS and SBS forces saw them finding creative ways to get behind enemy lines, where they would destroy poorly protected Luftwaffe resources like Aircraft, spares, fuel, and munitions.

HALFAYA

"Halfaya" is one of the most expansive maps in the game, and the all-out warfare here was an extreme change of pace compared to the single-player story. We needed to find a unique flavor that still had a distinct desert feel, which led to lots of fun exploration. It also needed an element that felt unexpected, which is why you'll see a lot of completely different directions in the concepts in this section, as these types of sketches give us a space to explore varied ideas quickly.

We wanted the player to fight their way across relatively open plains to really convey the vastness of the desert, but that wouldn't be ideal for gameplay reasons. Finding a believable balance between populating the terrain with cover and retaining the airiness of the map turned out to be a worthy challenge.

We considered several themes for the level in the beginning, but an idea that captured everyone's imagination early on was to draw on the monumental ruined cities and fortresses scattered across the region. They provide a suitably epic counterpoint to the vast coastal valleys, their human footprint serving as a stark contrast to the otherwise desolate landscapes. We believed that a good ruin would draw anyone's attention.

Another key pillar we rallied around was the unprecedented focus on dynamism. This was something we attempted to feature heavily in our explorations, as we wanted intense moments that would make the players stop just to take them in.

Opportunities for dynamism and physicality would need to be present throughout the world. We experimented with oil-covered airfields where stray bullets might create wildfires and give cool new experiences to players, or bombastic weather states featuring massive carpet bombings turning the area into a blazing inferno.

FRANCE

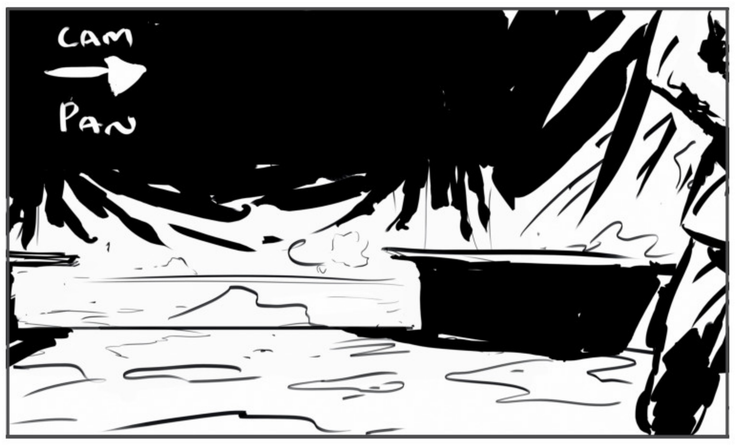
TIRAILLEUR | ARRAS | ESCAUT

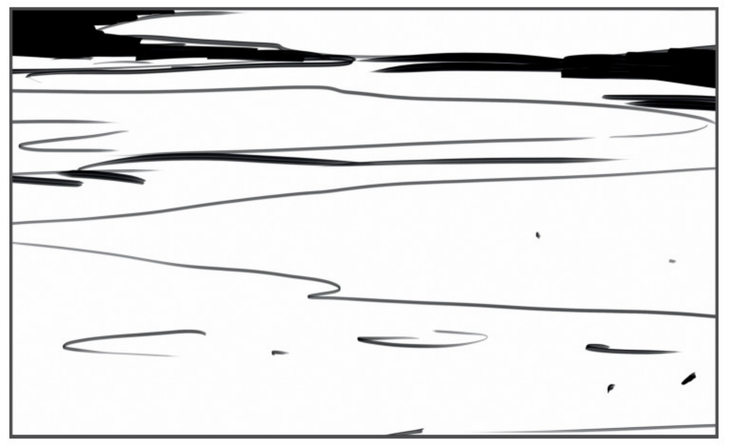
We have all seen the war in France:
Beaches. Hedgerows. Occupation. Resistance. Liberation.

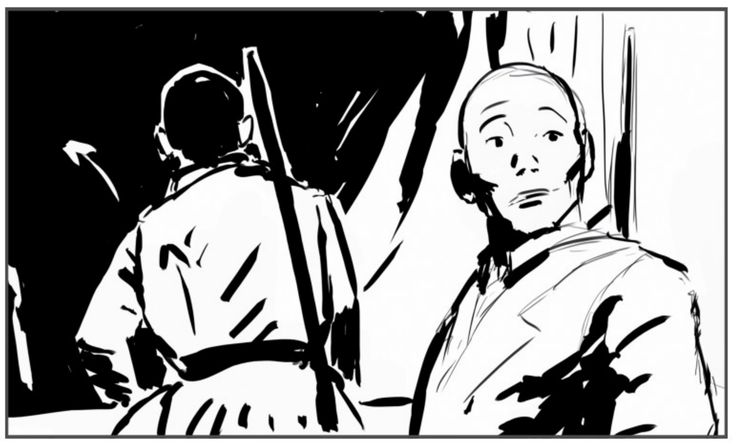
France has been explored.

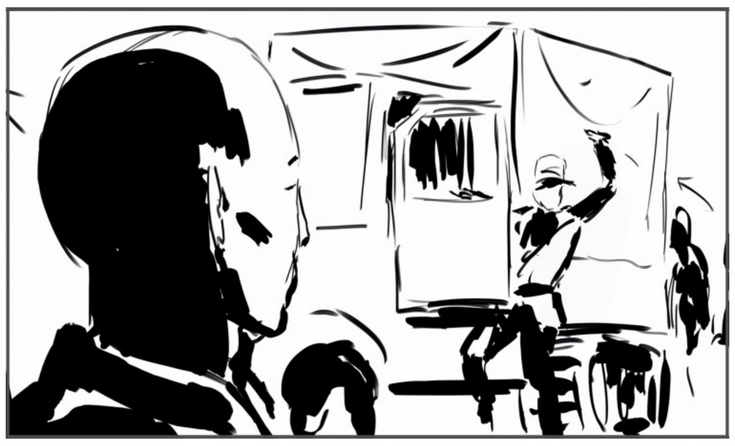
We challenged ourselves to define new iconography,
find new locales or disrupt those we may have seen before.

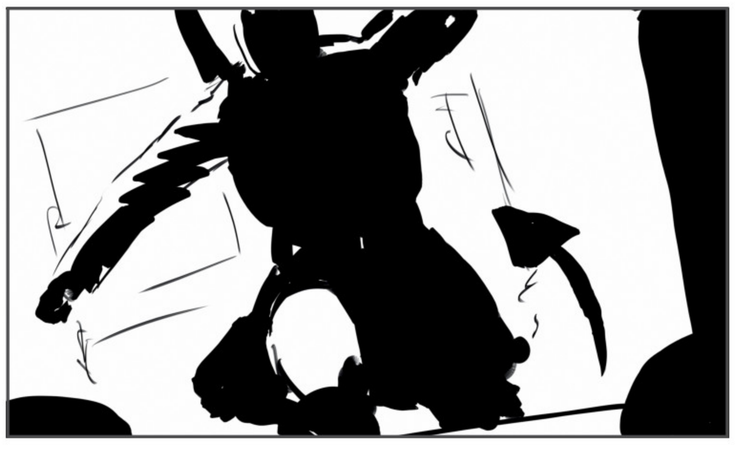
1944: As a member of the French Colonial Forces, you fight tooth
and nail to liberate the French homeland you have never seen.

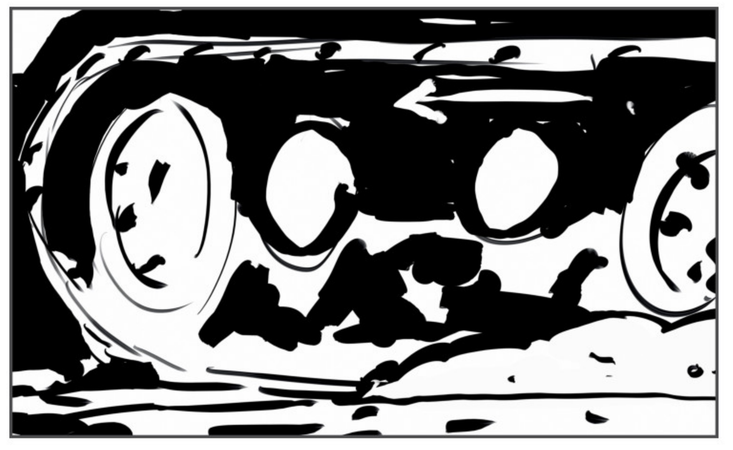


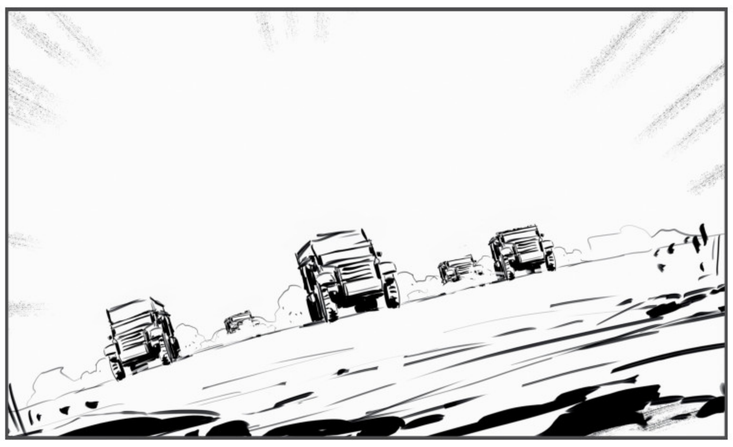


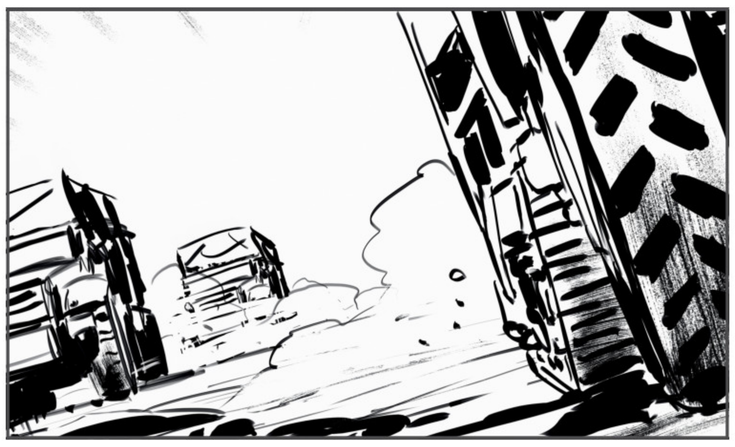


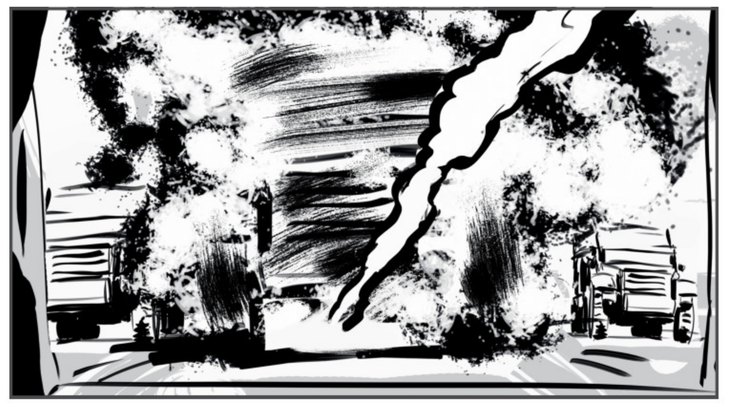




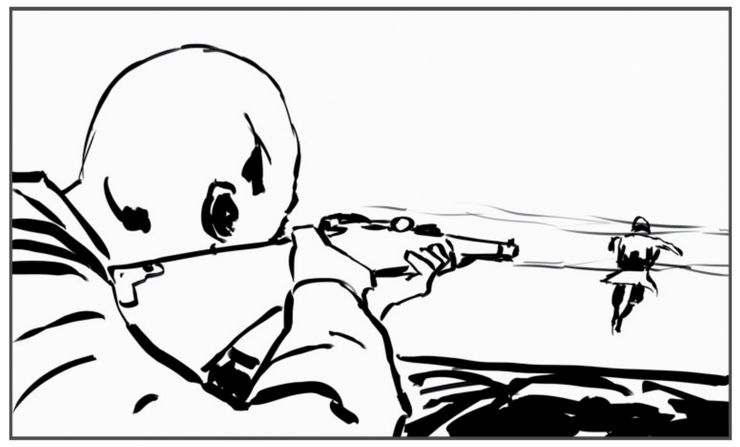


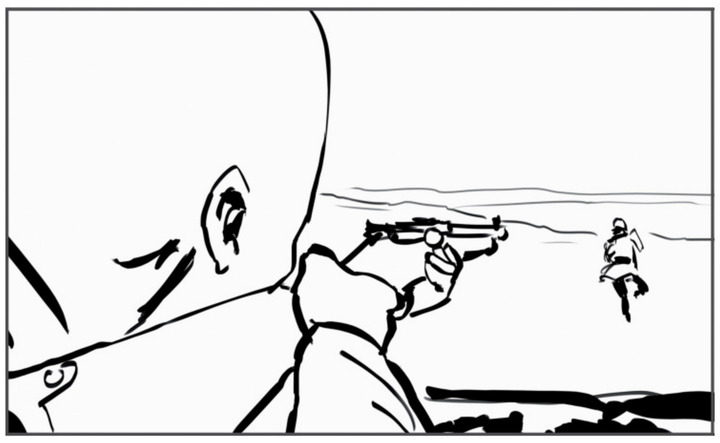


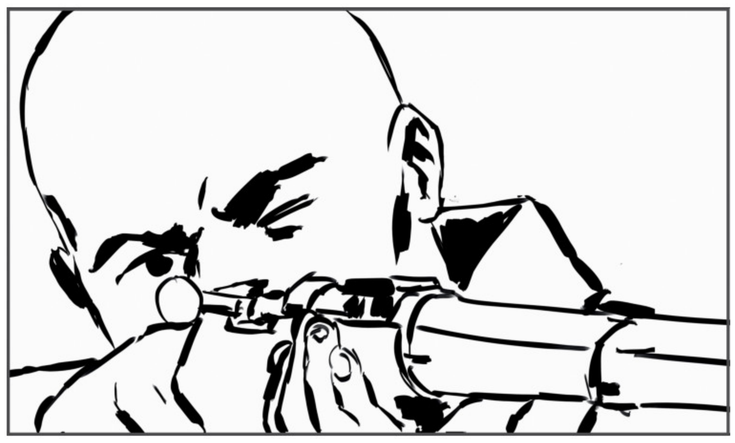


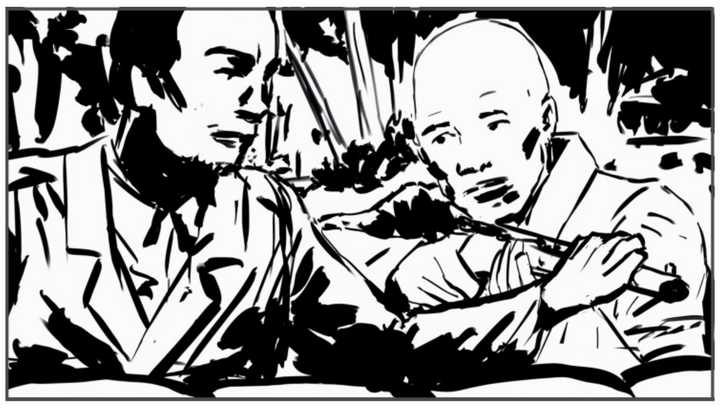


Colonial soldiers were drawn to fight for France in vast numbers. Over two hundred thousand colonial troops served under the French flag. But there is a lack of material covering their efforts, a shortage of photographs documenting their contribution. When their presence at a battle is mentioned, often accounts of the battle make no further attempt to discuss their role. Their story is the definition of underexplored.









The tirailleur fighters perfectly match our goal for untold stories. These soldiers fought in the Ardennes, Tunisia, Corsica, Italy—and finally for the liberation of France. Underdocumented and poorly recognized for their contribution, they were difficult to research. Nonwhite soldiers were blocked from participation in the liberation of Paris. As the war progressed, so did the "blanchiment" (bleaching) of French forces, with Senegalese troops being returned home before the war was over. Their story is compelling.

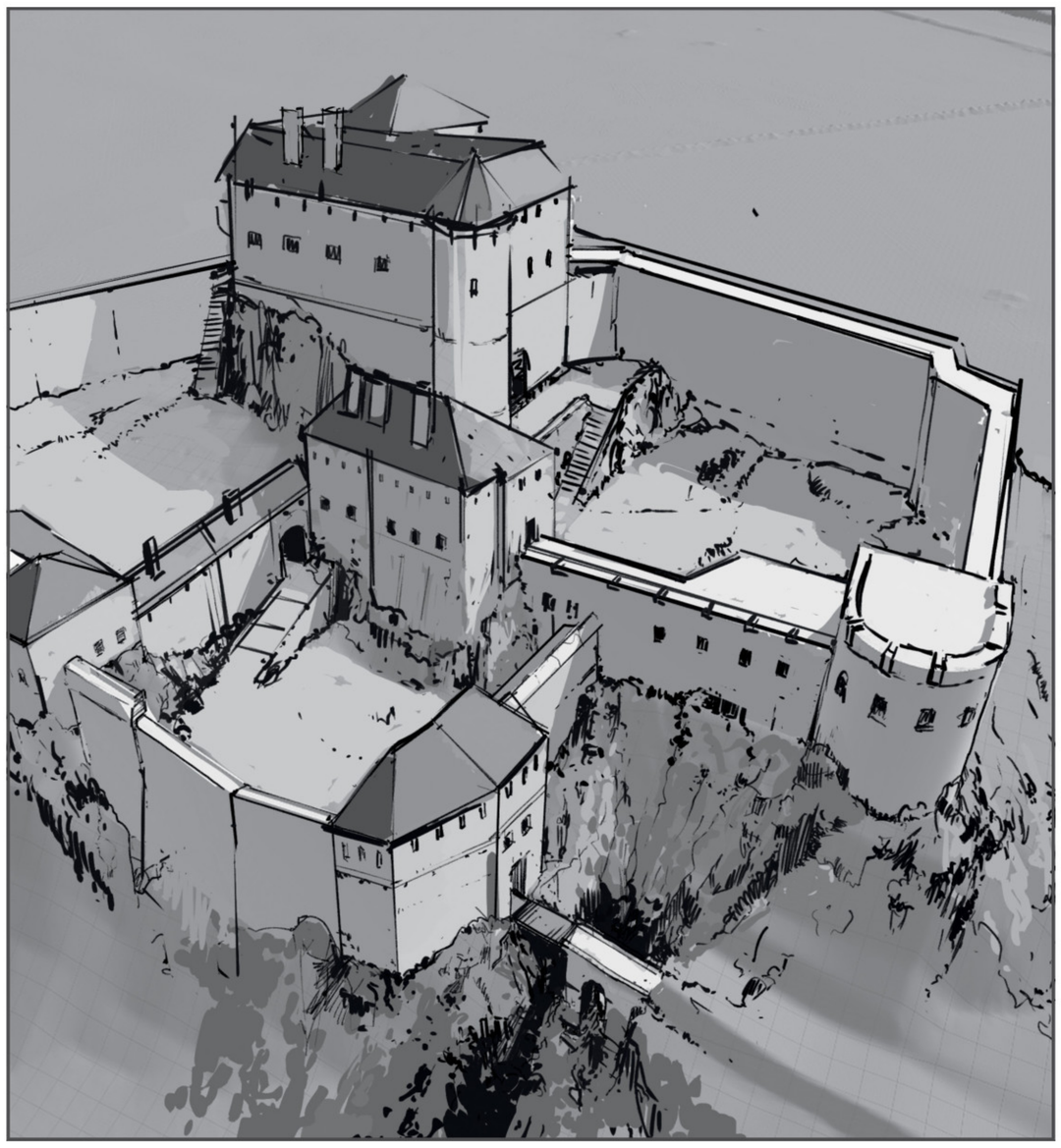
The "Tirailleur" War Story, set in the French countryside, is simultaneously one of our most and least traditional takes on the war. Most of us have been presented with the western front in dozens, even hundreds, of different depictions. But seeing it through the eyes of a colonial tirailleur meant that it was now a terrifying and alien place, as they are sent to die for a nation they've never seen before.

We made conscious attempts to distance ourselves from our most common conceptions of what the western front was and instead portray it with an almost surreal edge. Hopefully this means the players feel as if they're experiencing it for the first time, just like the characters are. This meant we could play with vibrant colors, heavy mist, and the bizarre military entrenchments dominating the landscape.

A lot of the exploration revolved around finding a signature palette for the entire War Story. The red forest was originally not tied to a specific map and was close to not even being used at all. Eventually, it found its way to "Tirailleur." We decided to take the palette even further. It was then a challenge to create enough contrast between the strong, warm tone and a cold counterpart, which would help us create a distinct identity for this particular story while capturing the otherworldliness of the setting in the eyes of the tirailleurs.

We could also vary the shape language of the forest to interesting effects. Lush canopies for a deceptive calm or splintered trunks setting up threatening clearings—all while staying within the same environment, pushing our theme of the beauty of nature contrasted with the brutality of the war.

It was important to use different beats to keep ourselves and the players on their toes. That included moving from the insanity of storming heavily defended trenches to an almost horror-styled chapter with German Fallschirmjäger stalking the mist to a finale in a picturesque French castle during sunset.



We didn't want to make those tonal transitions too jarring and bring the player out of the experience. As such, we attempted multiple takes on each level to find something that felt novel without completely breaking away from the experience the player has been having so far.

ARRAS

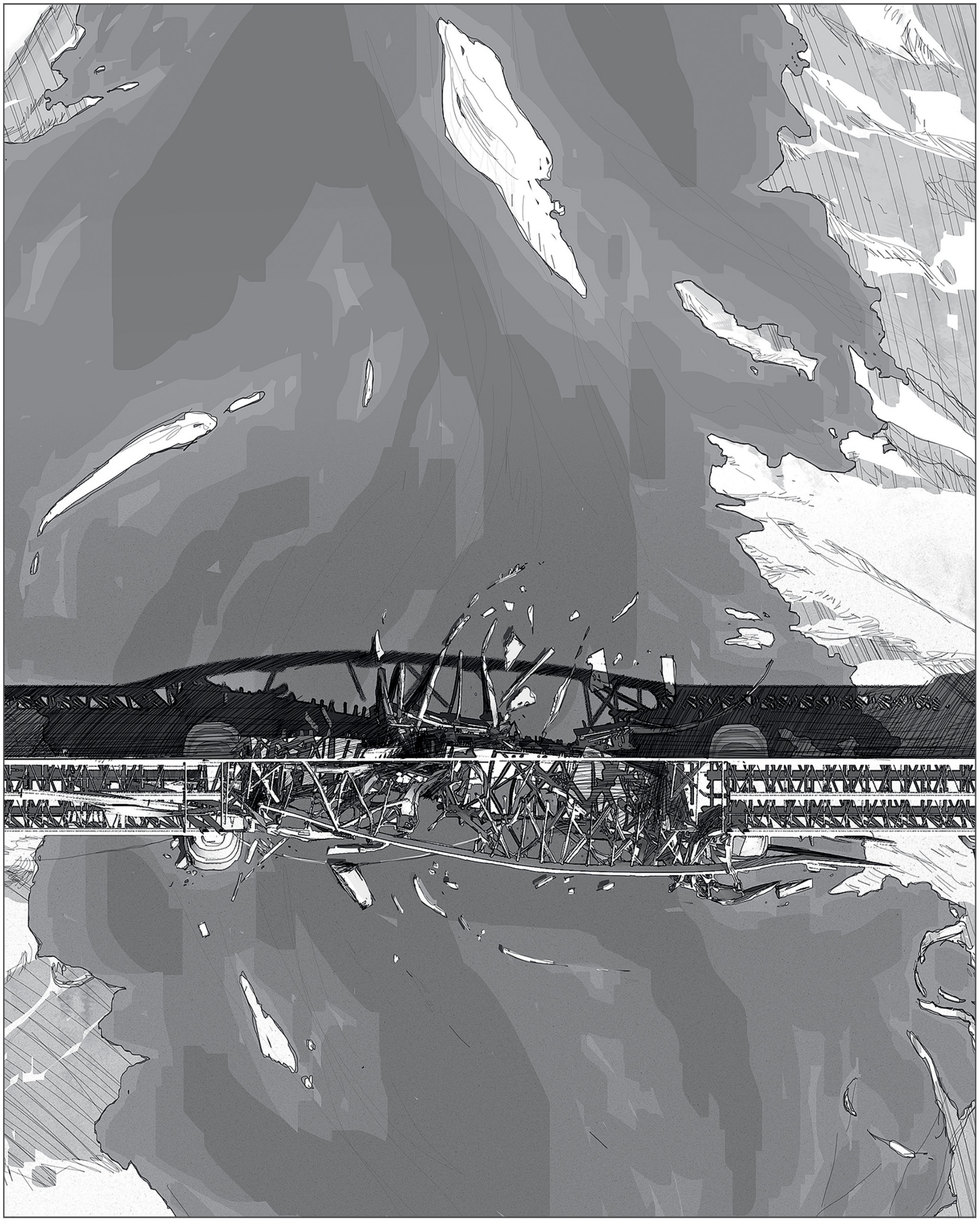
This level was intended as our main arena for tank battles. Fighting would take place across an epic and idyllic French countryside, where huge swaths of destruction caused by the lumbering vehicles would make the battlefield constantly change over the course of a match. This meant plenty of opportunity to create something with a spectacular sense of scale and player- caused destruction.

ESCAUT

The Escaut River was considered by many to be the last line of defense against a German attack. Keeping the Allied front along the river was vital for the survival of the French army. This theme inspired us to create tense imagery depicting a desperation that is ever present in war.

This level presented an opportunity to put a spin on what might be one of the most visited World War 2 battlefields, aside from Normandy. We attempted lots of iterations to make it feel unique, most notably by pushing the lights and colors in different directions to see what excited us the most.

We took this opportunity to go crazy with the exposure levels, seeing how we could make a normally dreary environment, like flooded wetlands, into something vibrant with color and light, especially as seen in the top image. We closely collaborated with the lighting team, finding cinematic and photographic reference that would help us think outside the box on how to represent different environments.



Every level has one key feature that's supposed to help define the area and be memorable for the players. For this one that feature was the metal bridge in the center of the level. We did a ton of different versions of the bridge, such as the one above, exploring ways in which the metal might twist and bend. We thought this might make for a good signature look for the level, visible from wherever the player might be.

Other ideas we brainstormed were enormous smoke pillars and extensive bunker networks—both of which still ended up in the level but were given secondary importance, as they didn't feel either noticeable or unique enough to define a level by themselves. We also had to consider the fact that both sides needed to see the feature fairly often during multiplayer gameplay.

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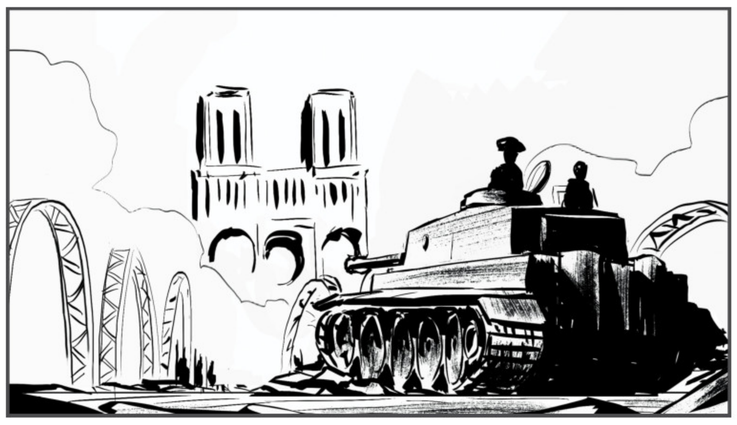
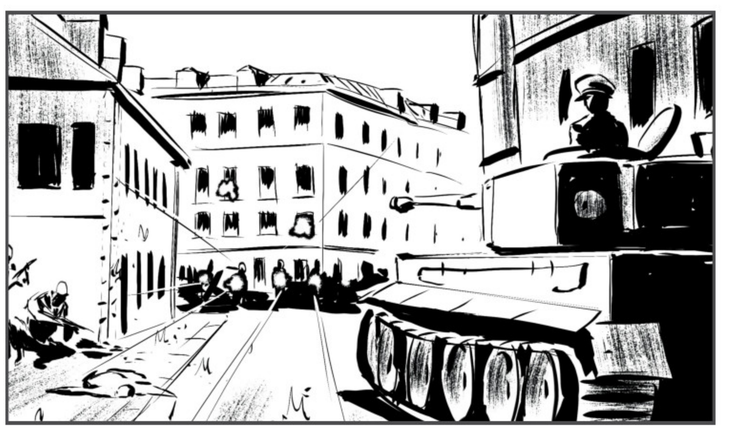
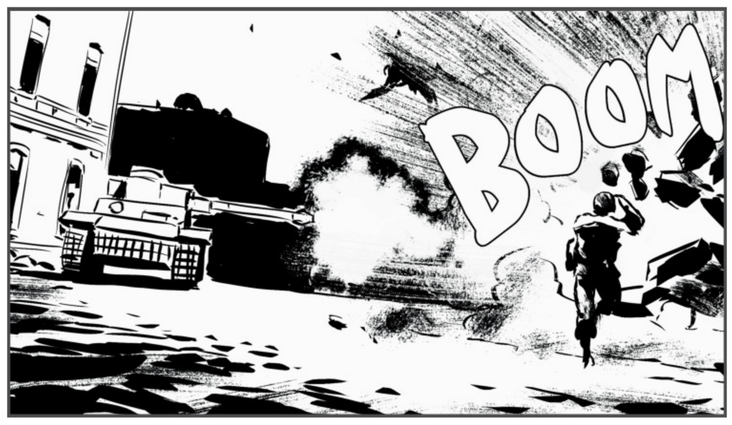
GERMANY

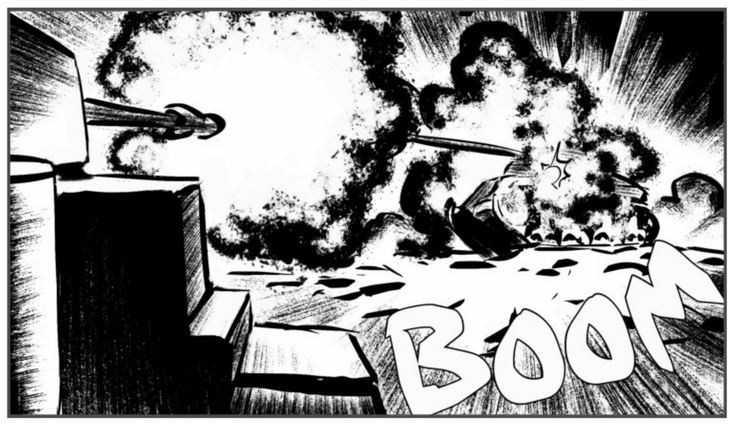
LAST TIGER

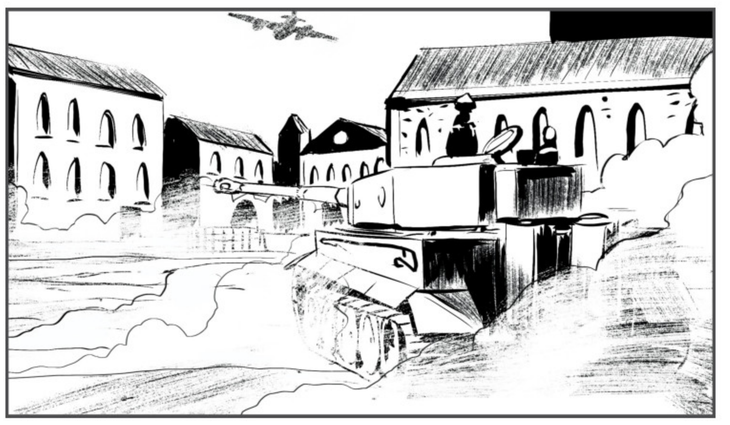
1945: Command a Tiger I tank in the last stand against the Allied forces before they cross the Rhine. Join a crew ordered to fight to the last—as they question exactly why they are fighting. Fight a defensive battle without hope in a legendary vehicle that seems like it cannot be destroyed.

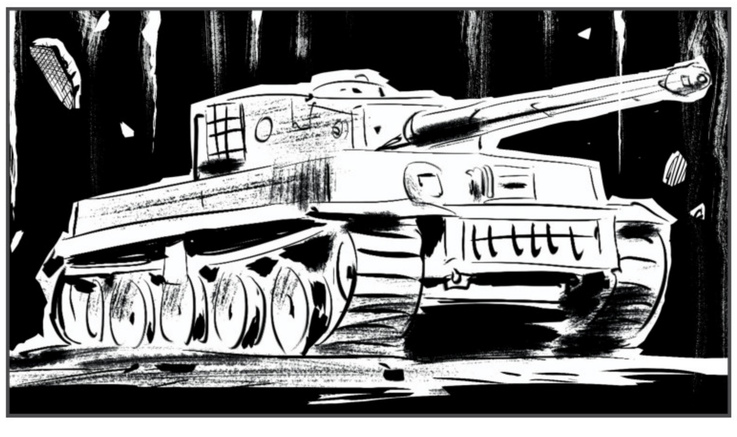






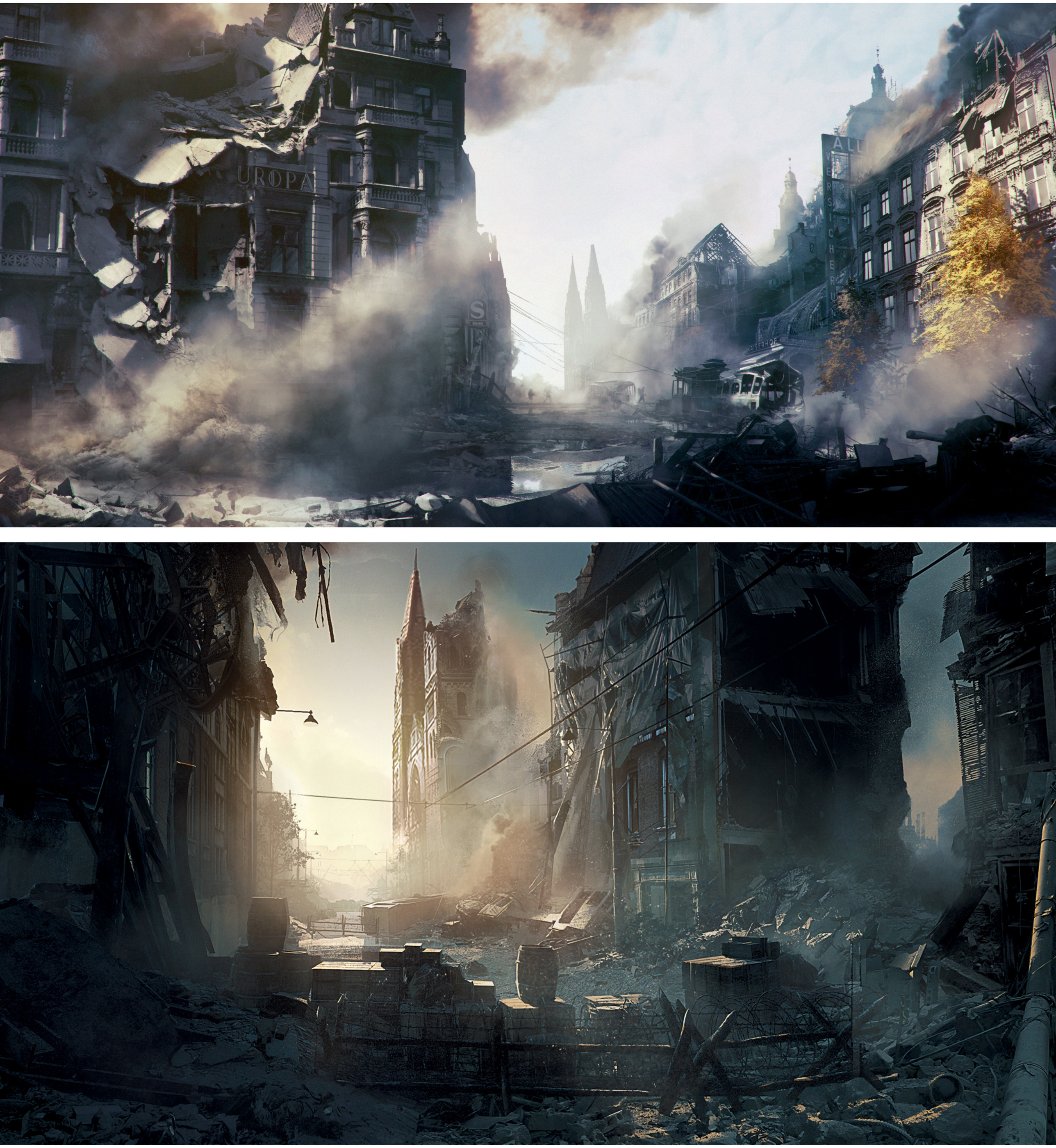






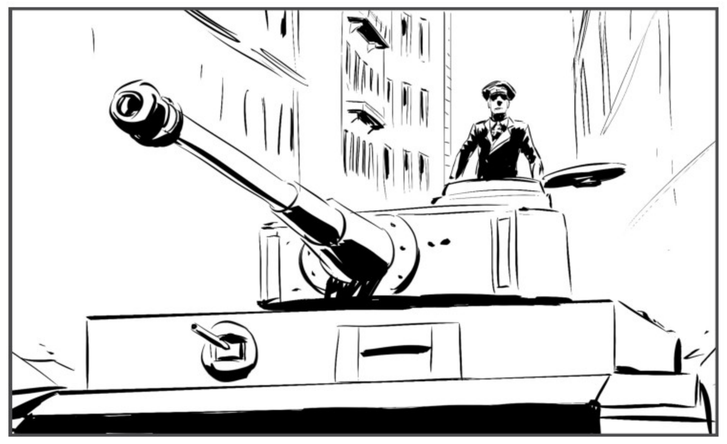
The Tiger I is one of the most iconic vehicles of the war. Only 1,347 were produced. But the icon endures. The Tiger is extremely durable. It is extremely well armed. You don't have to be a history buff to understand the Tiger. You just look at it—it is a brutalist design that simply looks like what it does. It knocks out enemy vehicles at range, and it does not go down easily. More Tigers were lost to mechanical failure or running out of fuel than to enemy action.

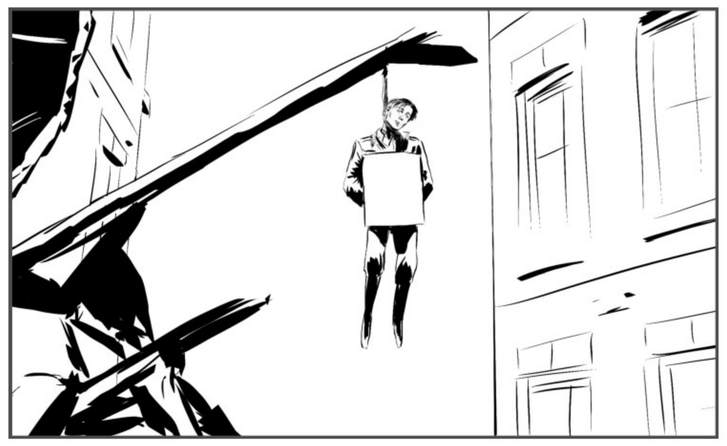
The events of "Last Tiger" unfold on the banks of the Rhine. The possibility of crossing the Rhine represents a breakthrough to the Allies—and a final point of failure for the German forces. In the opening of our story, our Tiger crew crosses the river to join the fight. The finale sees them fight with their backs to the river.

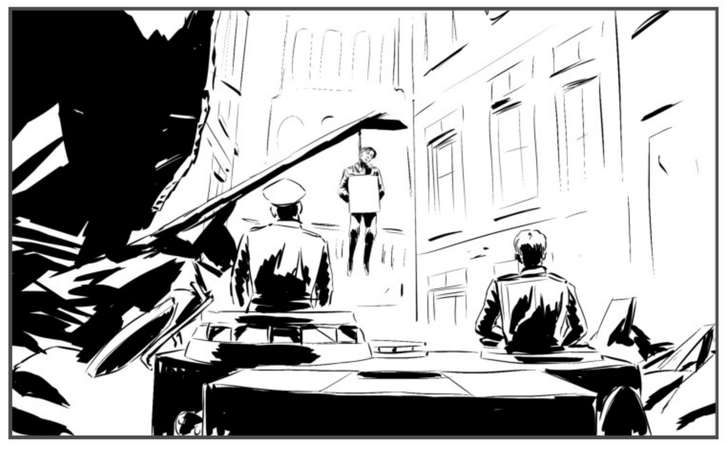


Portraying Germany during the Second World War is a singular and sobering challenge. This War Story would give us an unprecedented opportunity to tell the story of individual soldiers caught in the middle but also of the atrocities they—knowingly or unwittingly—helped perpetrate.

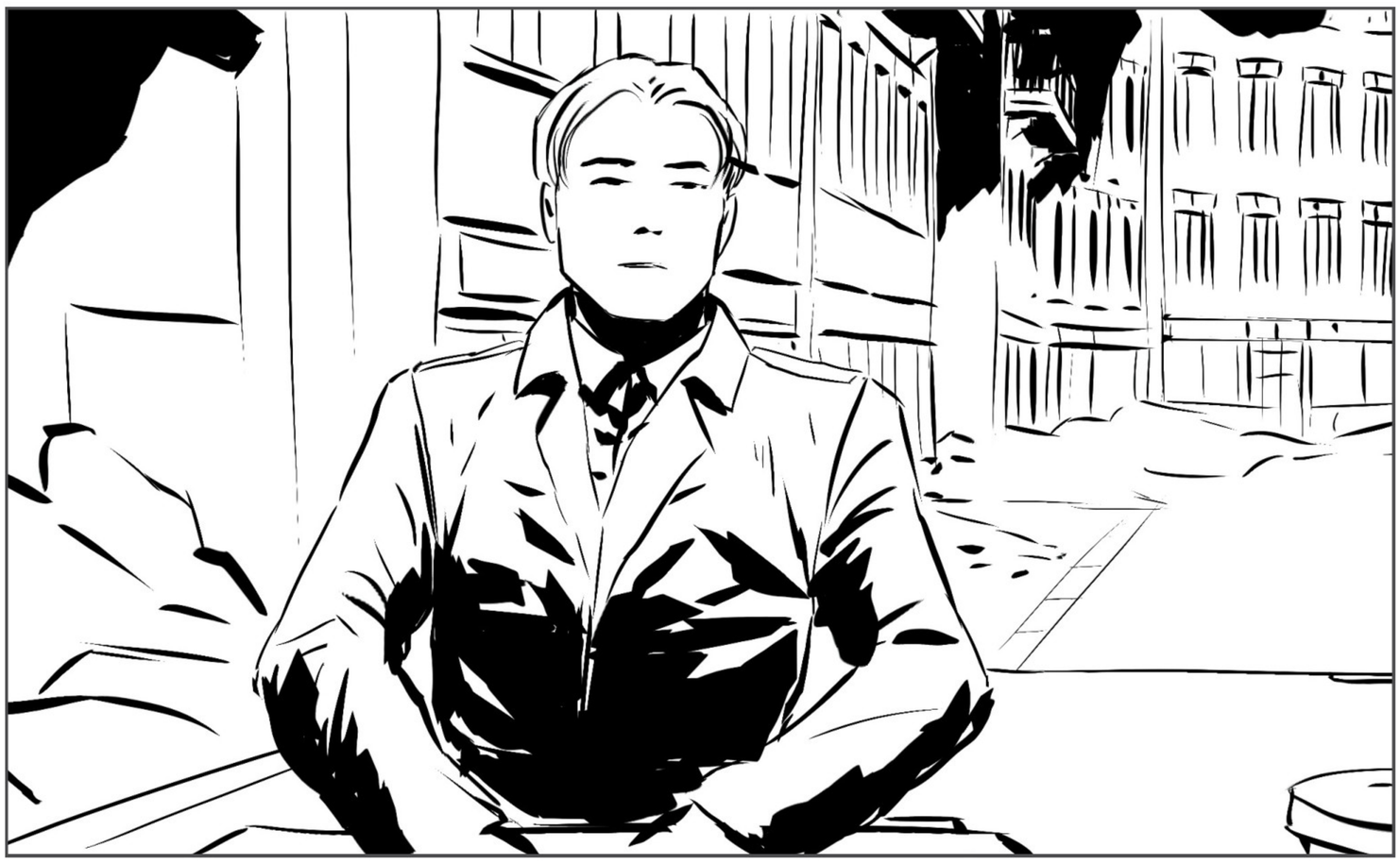
We need to take into consideration the expectations of our players for exciting and immersive gameplay. This is a balance we worked hard to maintain without making light of the situation—an artistic challenge that's difficult not to want to take on. Our focus on telling the stories of individual soldiers helped greatly in finding a direction in which we could take that challenge.

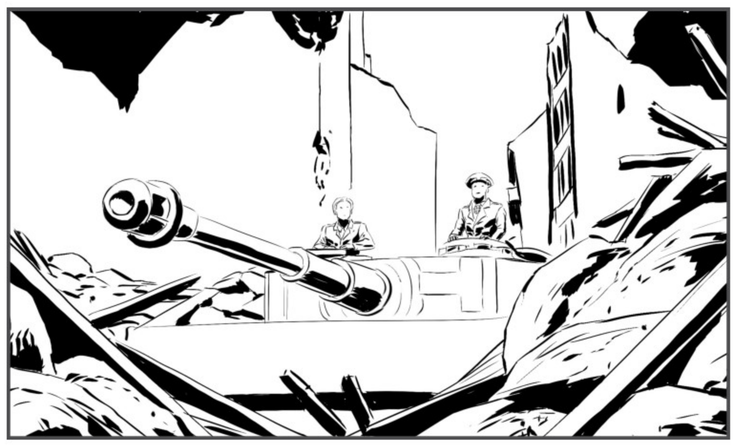






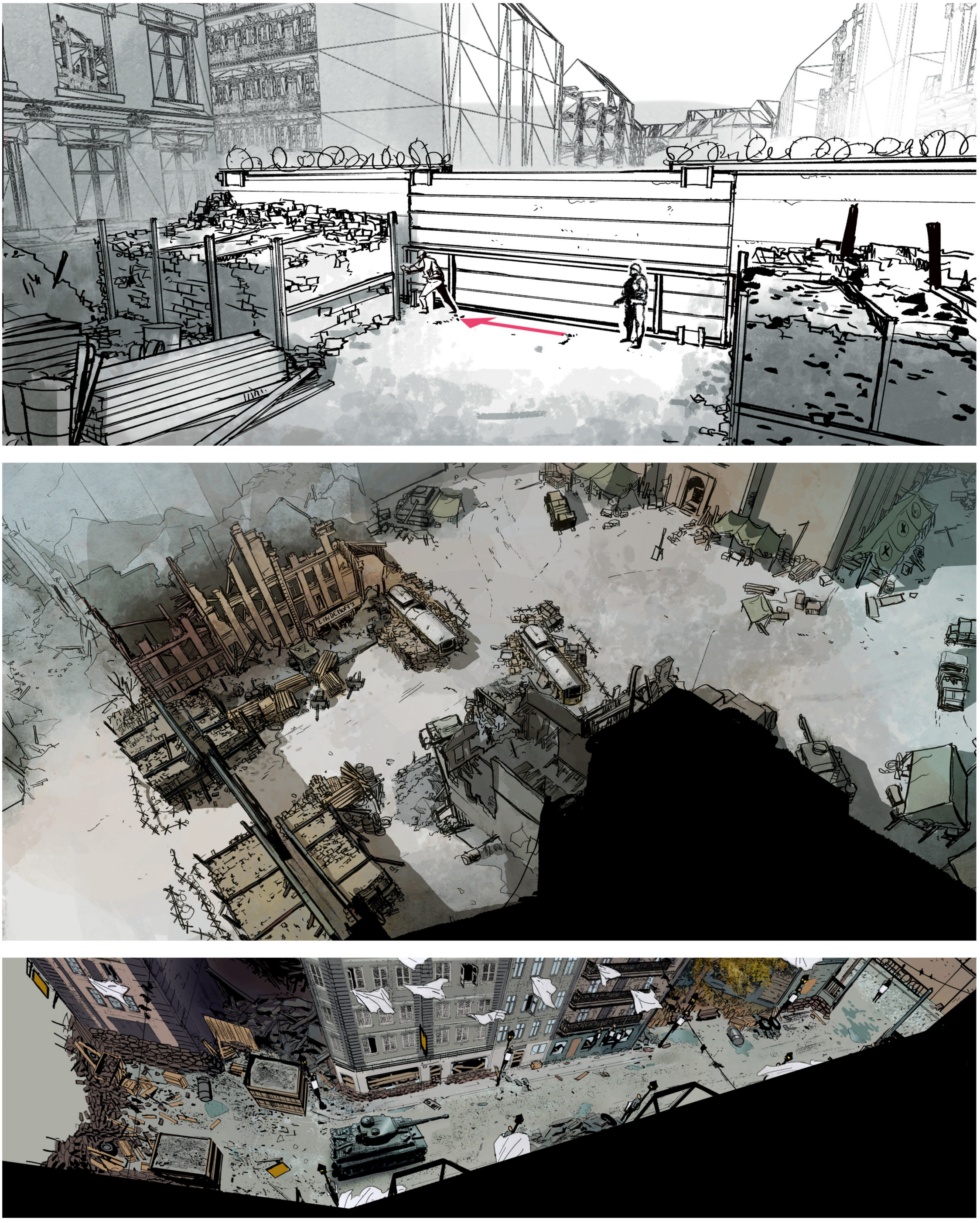
We knew that our story needed to examine why these soldiers are fighting. To that end, our characters each needed their own reasons to fight, their own perspective from which to argue their corner.



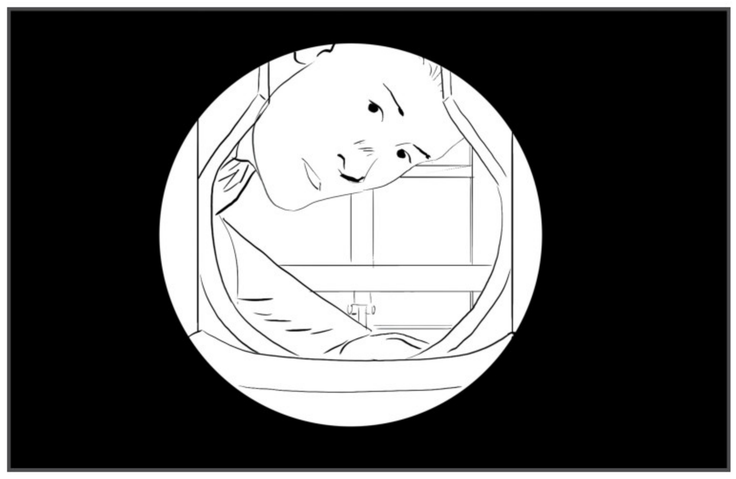


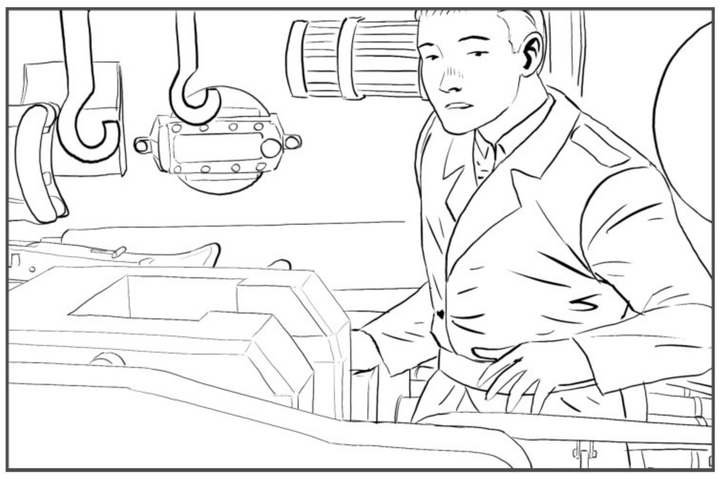
This is a story of a crew falling apart. It is a group coming undone as a result of the consequences they cannot escape.

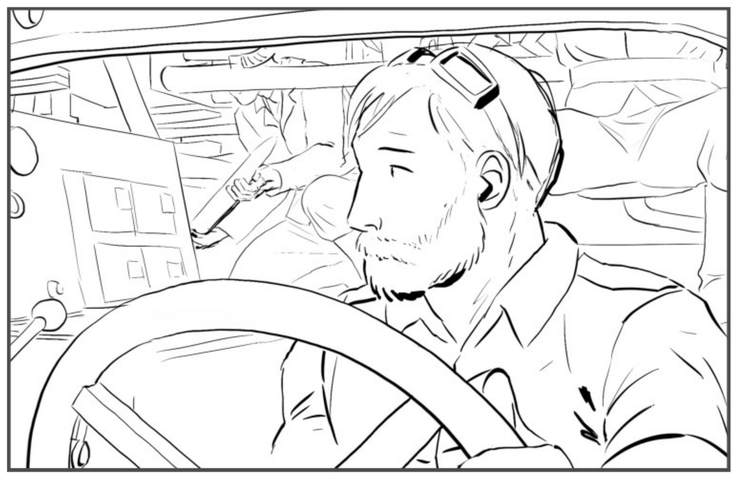
Showing the nearly apocalyptic setting of a destroyed nation on the wrong side of history meant we had to take a very different approach to the art we created compared to the other War Stories. We were presented with an opportunity to explore the darker side of the war and to give the player a front-row seat to the dawning realization of the horrors the characters have fought and bled to enable.

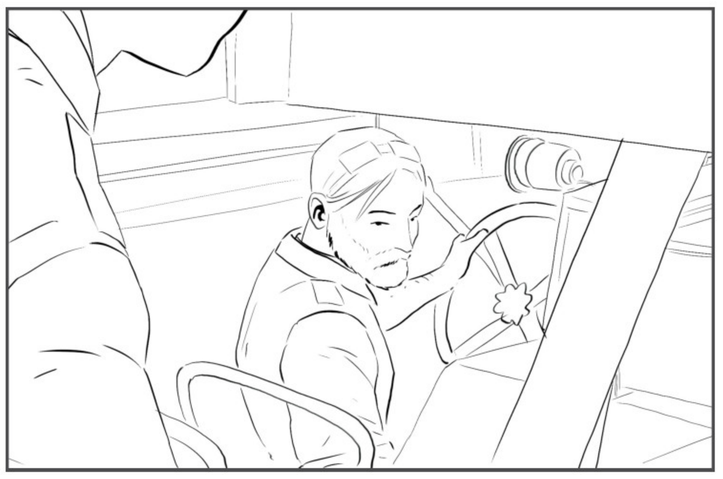


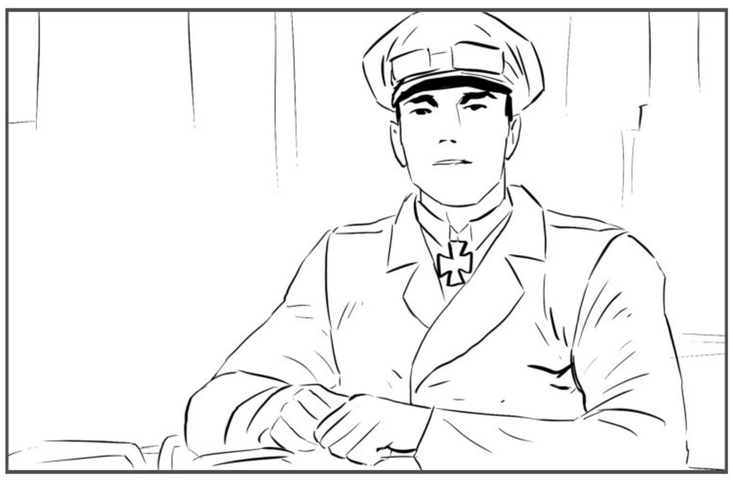
There were a lot of practical considerations to solve, which resulted in a number of sketches and drawings of specific layouts or functions which would be present throughout the unnamed city. The drawings here provide enough clarity to make them easier to re-create in the game.

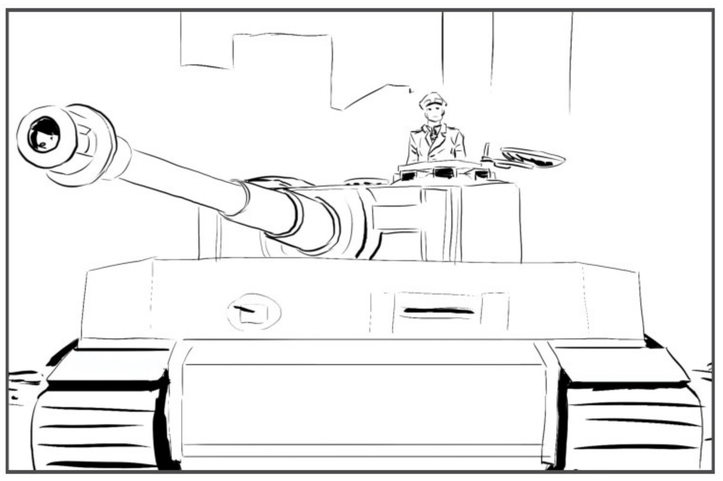


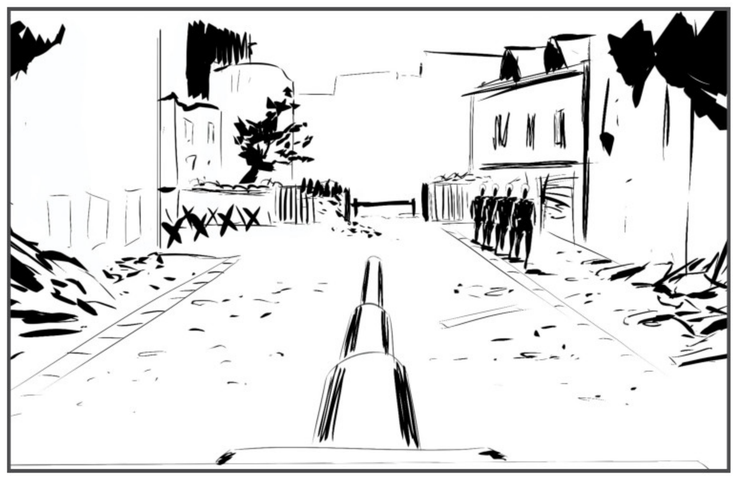


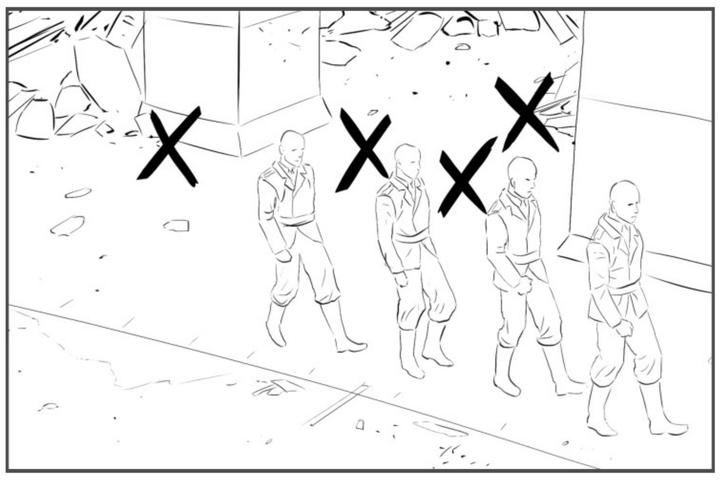


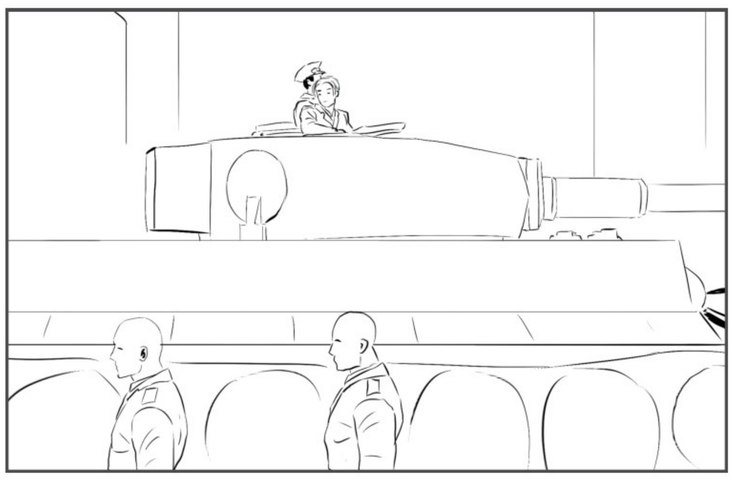


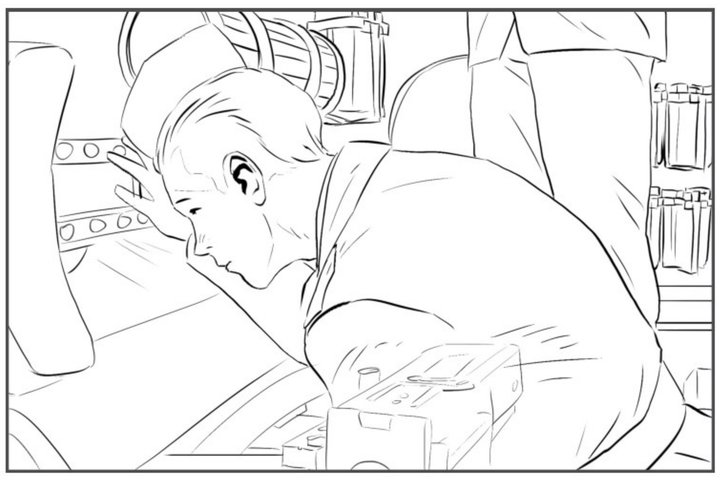


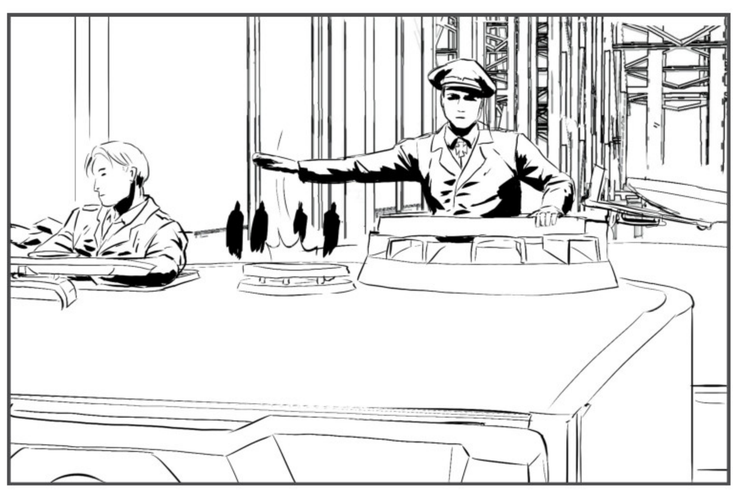


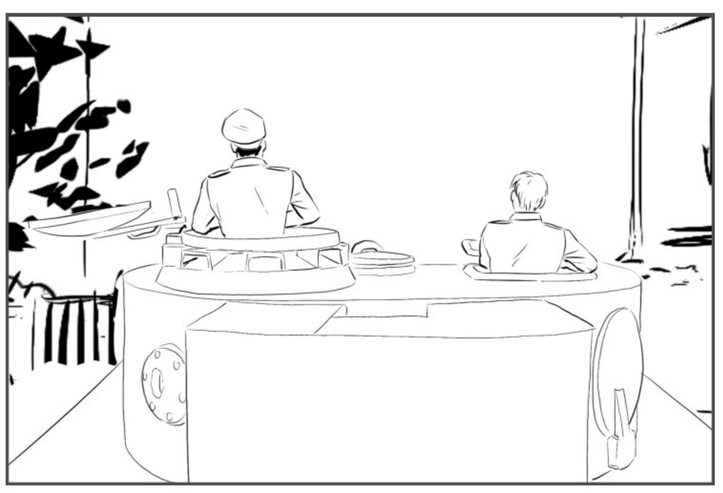




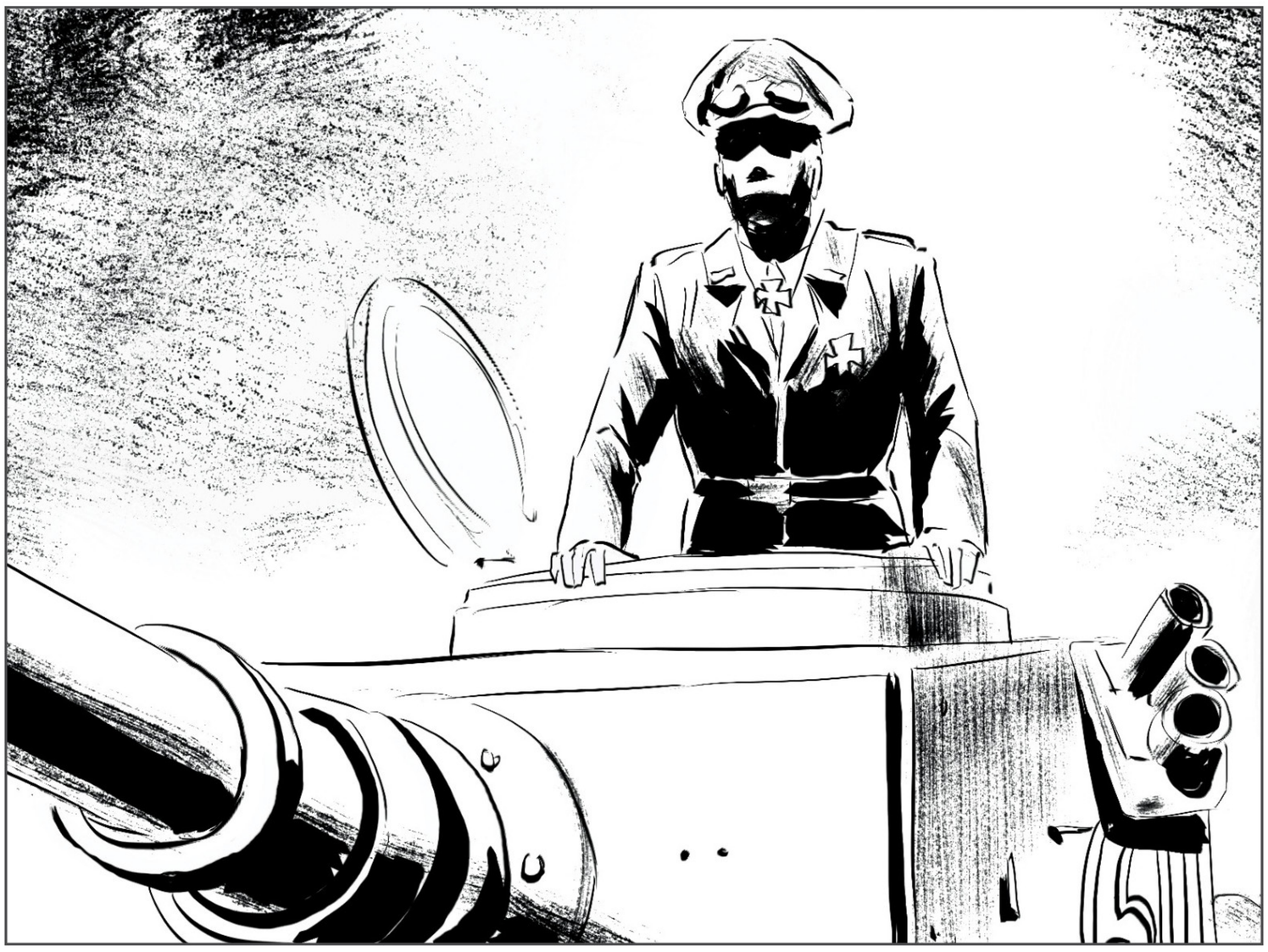


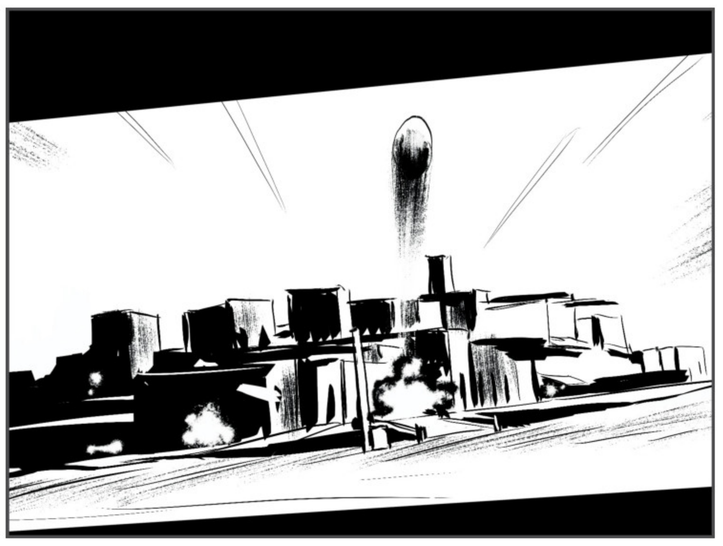


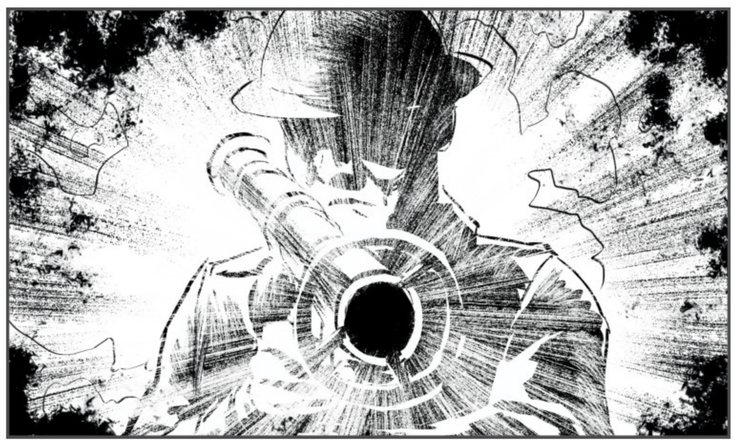


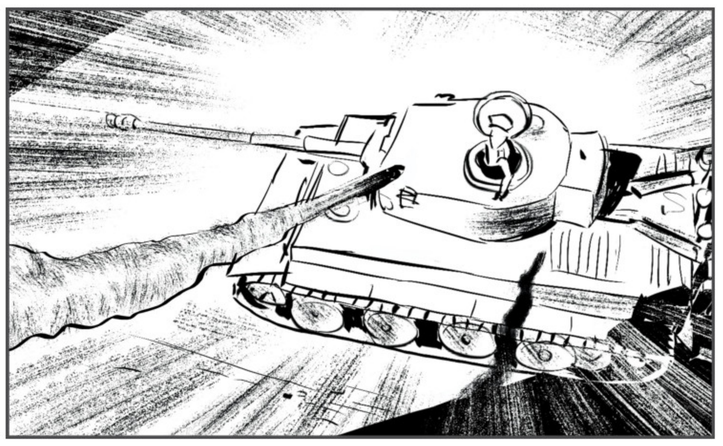


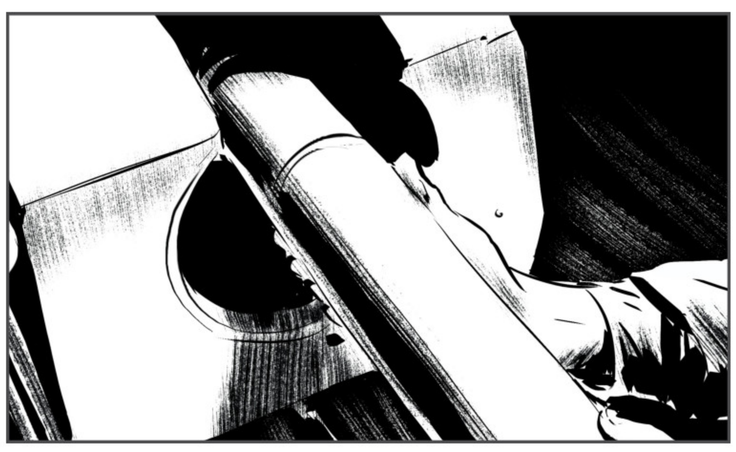
We knew we wanted the story to end on a dramatic and emotional note, which meant exploring lots of different ideas and running them by the different teams involved to make sure we landed in the right emotional spot. This is a lot of fun, as it allows us to go crazy with lighting and setting to try to craft something truly memorable.











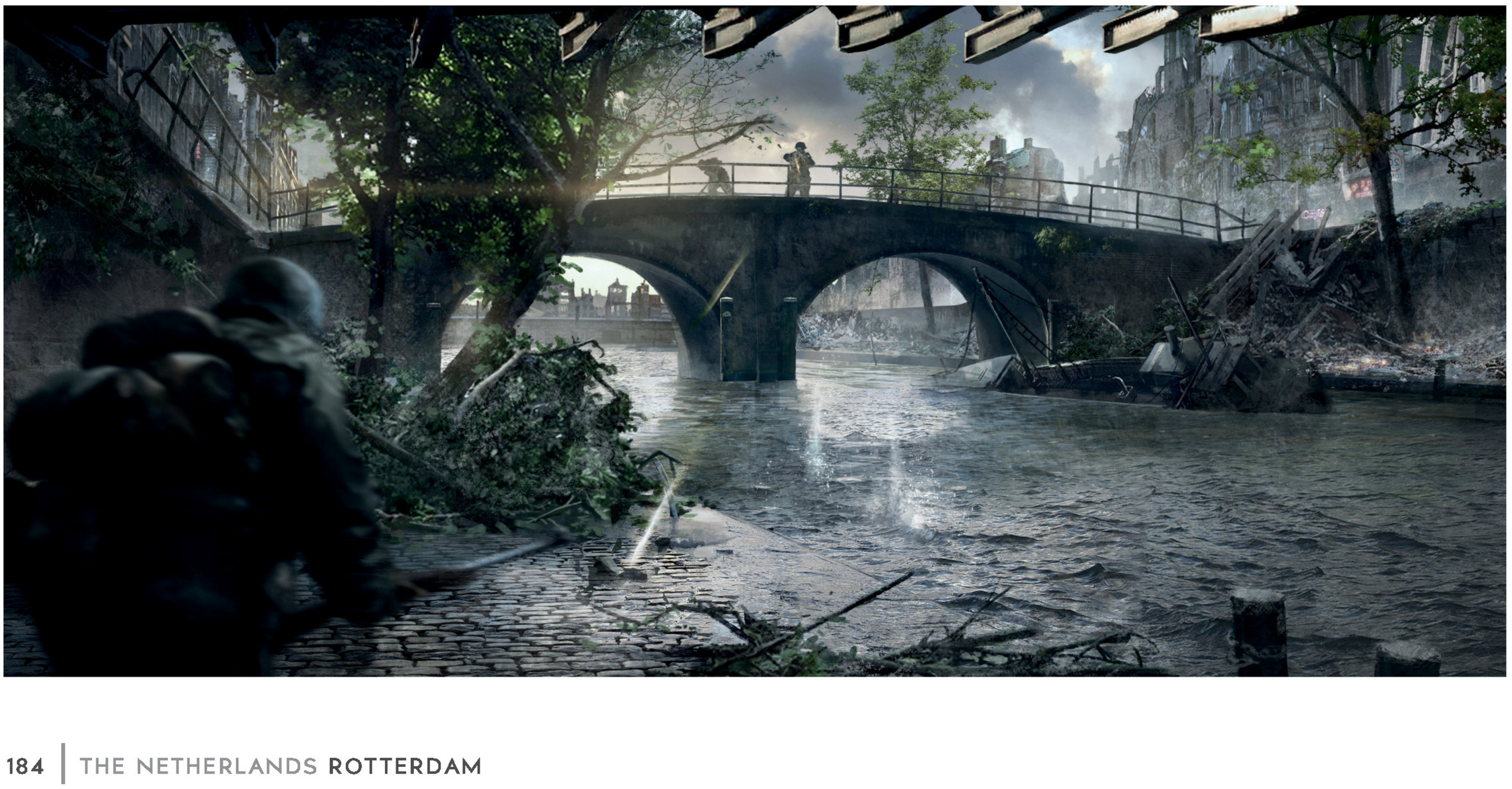
THE NETHERLANDS

ROTTERDAM | DEVASTATION

These multiplayer maps are the only ones that feature urban warfare. Our event was inspired by the real-life Battle of Rotterdam, where German forces ambushed the unknowing and unprepared Dutch city early one May morning, with the only resistance being a few policemen. The Dutch practically woke up to the war having arrived at their doorstep.

ROTTERDAM

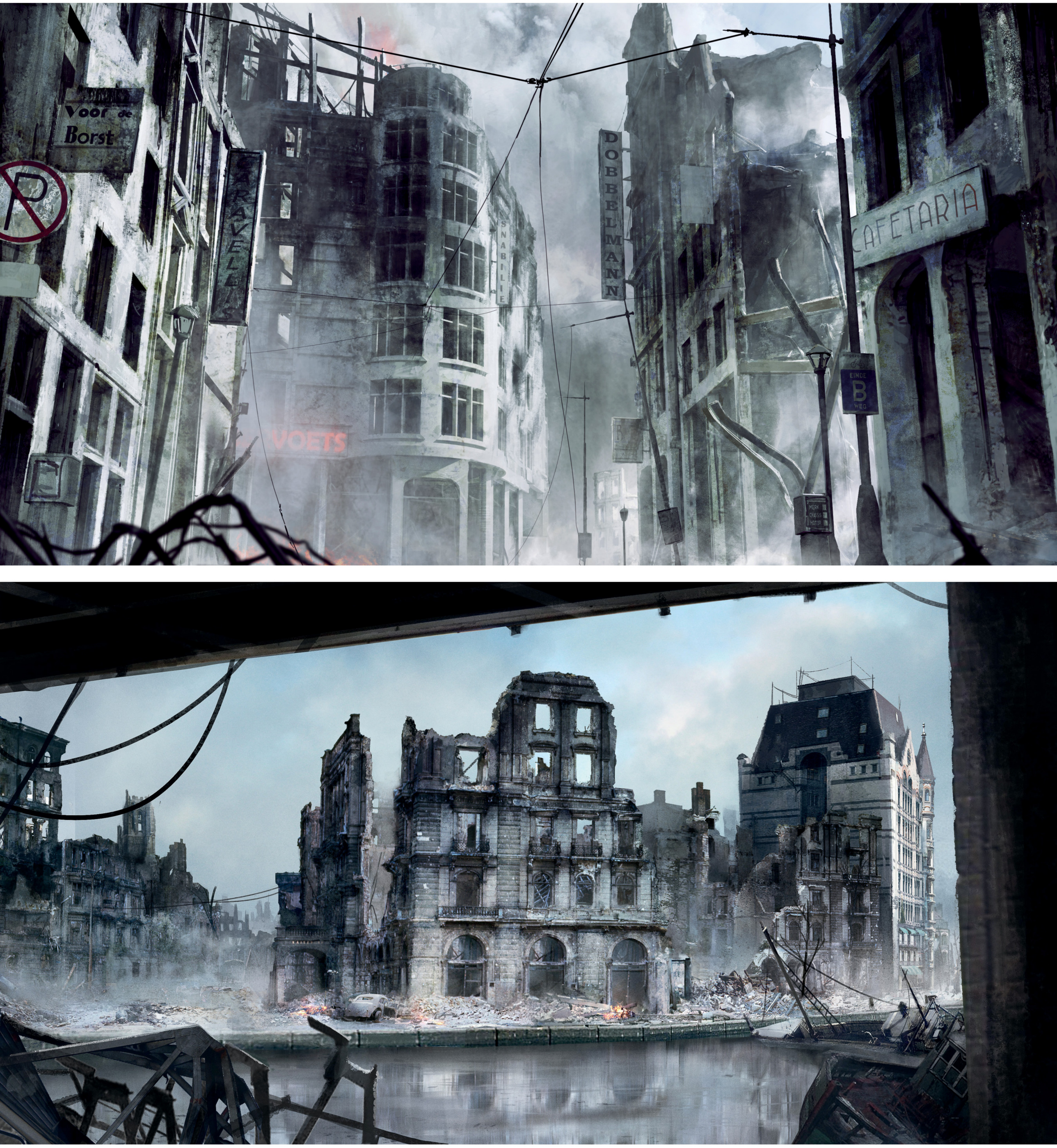
The canals and rivers of the real Rotterdam play a significant role in its identity, so the level and art teams felt strongly about designing the level around them. We really liked the idea of always being close to the water, so we made sure that it had a presence in most of our concepts, whether it was in the form of a canal itself or just wetness in the materials, as if it had rained only moments before.



The real Rotterdam was a truly urban city, with streets lined with modern buildings and neon signs and huge billboards adorning numerous façades. We felt that it was important to preserve these details in order to convey the feeling of modernity, which was also a way for us to differentiate this level from the urban levels of *Battlefield 1*.

The riverside promenade, the Boompjes, was a location that we looked at early on. It's interesting because it connects the river to the city, with one side lined with buildings and parks and the other with the Maas River. Crisscrossed with a network of traffic lanes, it was a key location for us to include to reinforce Rotterdam as an urban city.

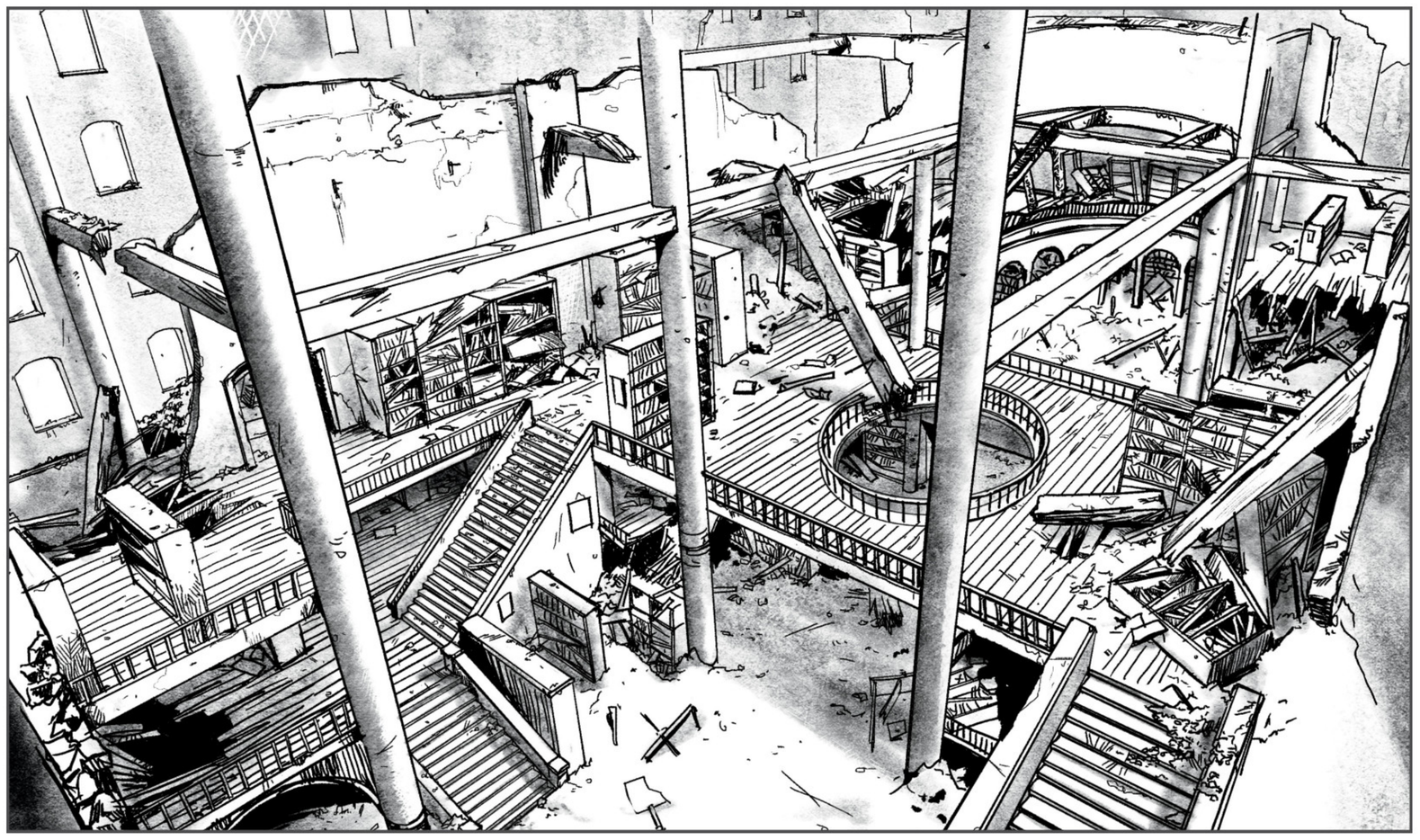
We were always aiming for "Rotterdam" to be the opposite of its sister map, "Devastation." "Devastation" started out as a very dark level, so we wanted to contrast that in "Rotterdam" by, essentially, reversing the color scheme, making it light and dusty instead. In these first concepts of the map, we had an idea with the Level Art team to cover the ruins in thick layers of building dust and debris.



Even though we really liked the look of the layered dust, we ended up scrapping it when we realized that this made the two urban maps too close to each other thematically. We also wanted to go back to the initial idea that Rotterdam was practically ambushed by the Germans, which would mean that we needed to preserve the city in its original, undestroyed state.

DEVASTATION

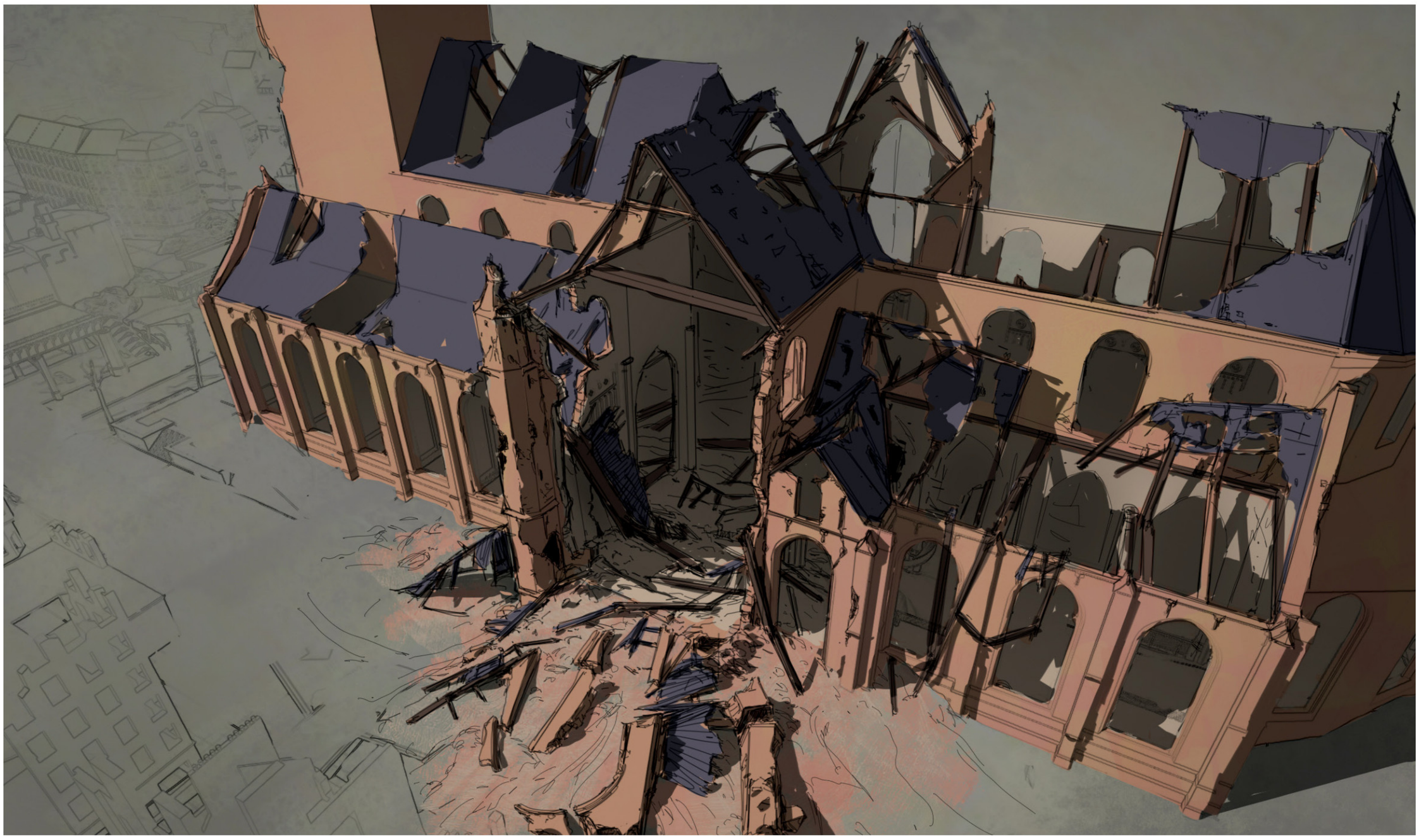
The German plan was to overrun Rotterdam in no more than two days; however, the Dutch resistance turned out to be a lot more determined than what anyone had anticipated. As the fighting went on, more and more of the city was destroyed. Inspired by this real-life event, we quickly set out to make the "Devastation" level live up to its name.

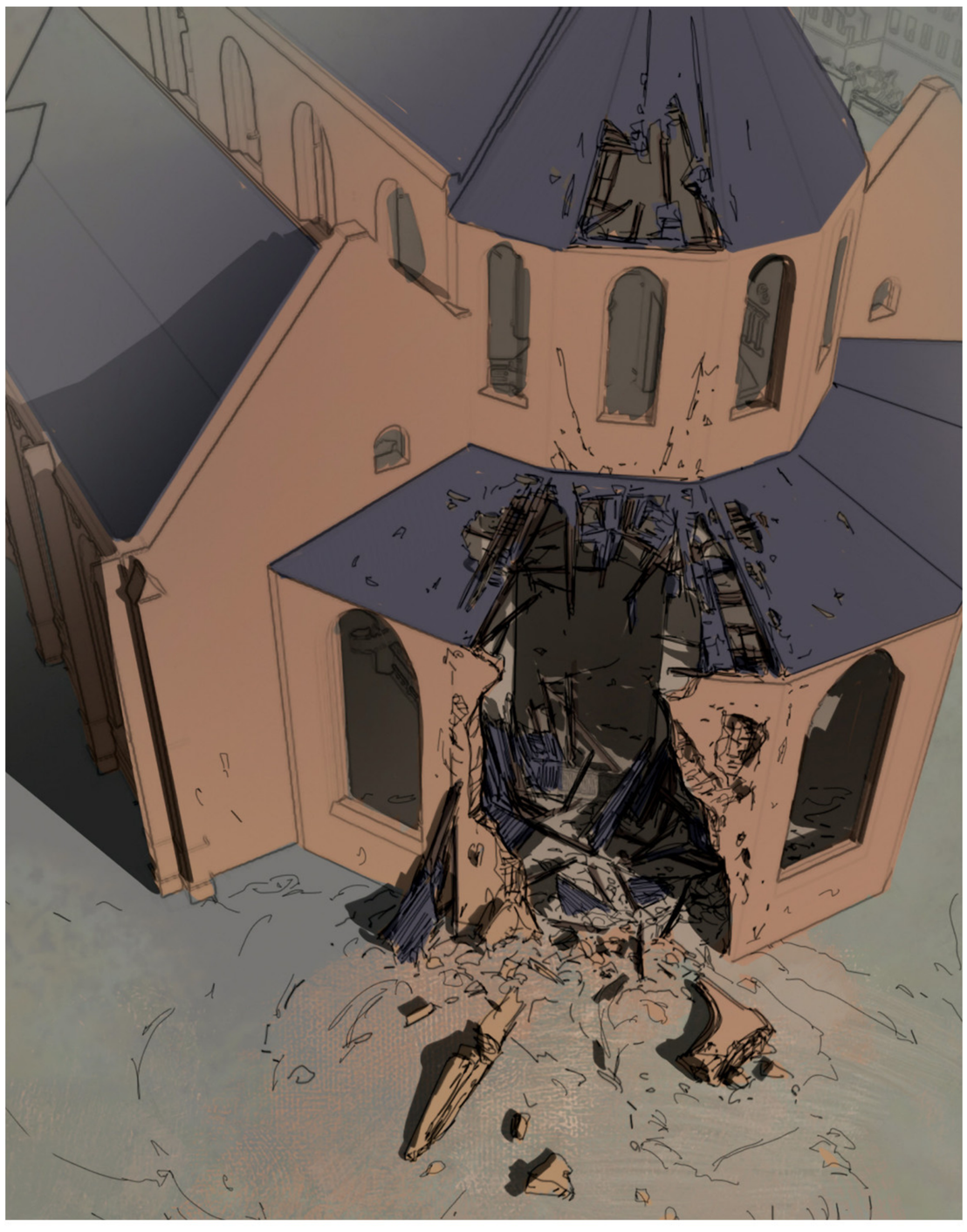


As ruined as the map is, we felt that it was important to flesh it out a little bit by adding a few distinct locations to remind the player that this was once a functional city. This led us to include facilities such as a library and a cinema, which fit well with the urban theme. Seeing that the city was almost completely destroyed, we had to take liberties with the light sources, so in addition to the signal flares and fires, we let a fair number of neon signs survive the destruction.

Even in the city's ruined state, we managed to find a way to show modernity through the devastation in the shape of steel beams. They are very helpful in conveying a sense of new architecture, but they also served another purpose. In our extensive reference searches, we would see steel contorted into twisted shapes that seemed really wrong and unnatural, so it was something we grabbed onto to create these hauntingly ruined landscapes.

The church is the centerpiece of the level, so we put a lot of effort into making it and its surrounding areas interesting and believable. Sometimes, one concept will have to serve several purposes. Aside from having a purely explanatory role to guide the set dressing and props of that particular space, it also has to act as the key image to represent a whole map. Such was the case with the top image, which contains most of the elements—like neon signs, steel ruins, destruction of infrastructure, and particle effects—that are later used throughout the map in varying degrees.



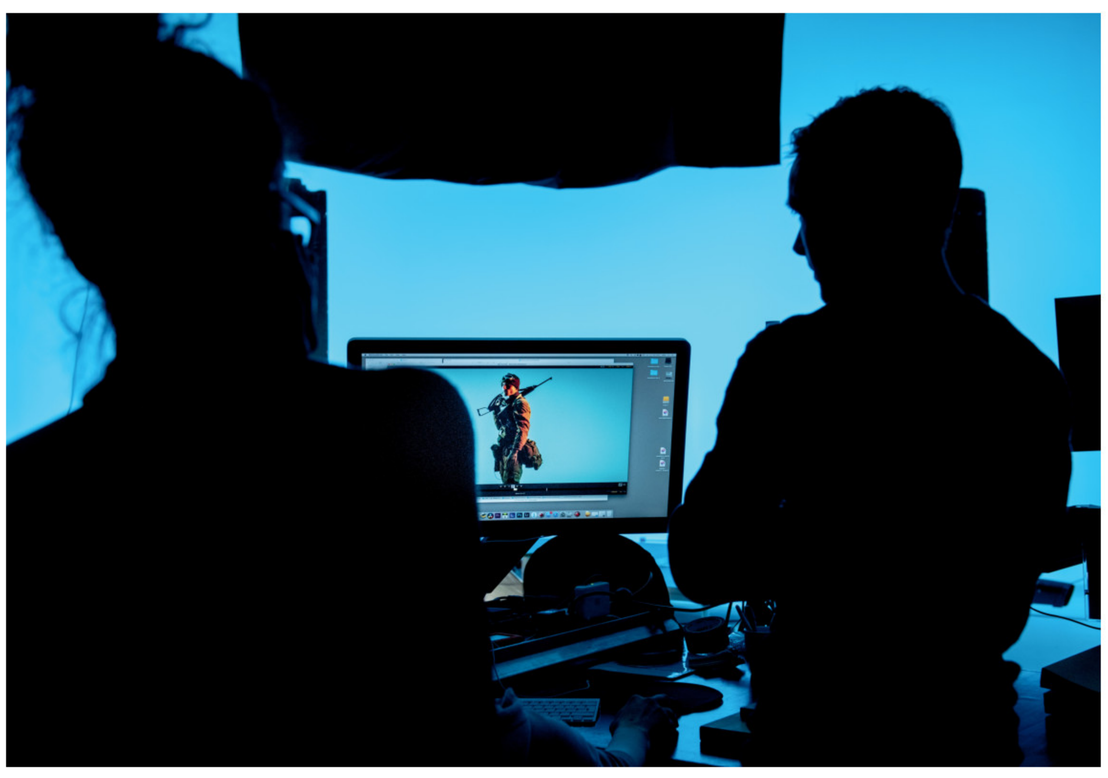


We made several line art paint-overs of the destruction of the church to assist the Level Art team. We needed to be mindful about the specific types of materials used in order to create believable damage, so we studied how the beams interconnected and made sure to include a variety in the sizes of the destroyed pieces, creating recognizable shapes that are mirrored elsewhere in the architecture.

BRANDING

CREATING A SIGNATURE

The signature branding of the *Battlefield* franchise was established with *Battlefield: Bad Company 2* and is ever evolving. Each new title has its own design direction and distinct version of the blue atmosphere and orange heat signature. *Battlefield V* marks the first time the game's visual identity campaign art is anchored in conflict: each piece has a corresponding one showing the other side of the conflict, displaying a suspended anticipation as each soldier is captured in motion.



Consistency is important to the *Battlefield* brand, and therefore the visuals of the campaign art relate perfectly to the game; the exact same uniforms, equipment, models, and makeup effects are found in both game and marketing art.

Profoto

The heat signature design changes for each title, and for *Battlefield V* we worked with light artifacts captured through a broken lens. To achieve that look we used a wide variety of still and film photography that combined physical and digital effects along with lens whacking, sheets of glass, and actual broken lenses.

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